



Art and Symbolism in Medieval Europe

Papers of the 'Medieval Europe Brugge 1997' Conference
Volume 5

edited by
Guy De Boe & Frans Verhaeghe

I.A.P. Rapporten 5

Zellik
1997

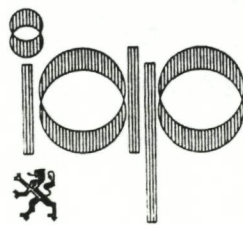
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uitgegeven door / edited by

Prof. Dr. Guy De Boe



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Preface

Art and symbolism pervade most if not all fields of interest to medieval and later archaeologists and in a number of countries, the history of medieval art and architecture was in fact one of the many fathers of the archaeological study of medieval times. This old link between the different disciplines has lost nothing of its attraction, particularly as archaeological fieldwork continues to turn up new evidence which contributes significantly to the history of art and architecture. One could reasonably argue that with the exception of the so-called fine – and mainly pictorial – arts and segments of the study of art and architecture on the basis of written sources, archaeology is instrumental in renewing our understanding of the medieval and later perceptions of many different forms of art and architecture. This is certainly the case where all kinds of smaller art works, major and minor buildings, the broad range of decorative artwork and the more common and often somewhat humbler decorated objects are concerned.

Symbolism is – almost by definition – closely linked with the concept of art and with the intricate problems of detecting, identifying and explaining specific meanings in art objects and decorations. It is therefore reasonable to join the two notions, as they also were on the occasion of the first MEDIEVAL EUROPE conference in York in 1992.

Again – and as with the other themes discussed at the Brugge conference – the subject of art and symbolism cannot readily be divorced from the many other concerns of medieval and later archaeology. Notwithstanding the fact that on the whole and for all sorts of reasons European medieval and later archaeology professes regrettably little systematic interest in less tangible issues such as hidden meanings and all kinds of symbolisms, we should not forget that all material objects always have many different meanings depending on their functions, uses and context. Therefore, symbolism – particularly in the sense of

social strategies – is also present in other sections (and volumes) of the MEDIEVAL EUROPE BRUGGE 1997 conference and notably in sections 07 (Material Culture) and 10 (Method and Theory). Similarly, a wealth of information on architectural aspects of all kinds of buildings (castles, religious buildings such as churches, cathedrals and monasteries), urban and rural buildings, etc.) is included in the contributions presented within the context of the other sections (notable sections 01, 02, 03, 04 and 11) of the Brugge conference. This in itself sufficiently illustrates the need for bringing together the information related to some many aspects of the medieval and later worlds and societies, which was one of the basic philosophies of the York and Brugge MEDIEVAL EUROPE conferences.

For sheer practical reasons, however, a number of contributions presented on the occasion of the international conference on medieval and later archaeology MEDIEVAL EUROPE BRUGGE 1997 which took place in Brugge, Belgium, on 1 through 4 October 1997, have been grouped in section 05 under the general heading *Art and symbolism - Art et symbolismes - Kunst und Symbolik - Kunst en symbolisme*. The section was organized by Märit Gaimster (United Kingdom) and Hubert De Witte (Urban Archaeology Service, Brugge, Belgium). Taking into account the notion 'symbolism', a special workshop on pilgrim badges was organized within the context of this section by A.M. Koldewey (Catholic University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands). The contributions brought together within the context of section 05 concerned subjects more explicitly and directly related to issues involving art and symbolism.

The present volume offers a collection of pre-printed papers, a number of which were presented orally and debated during the sessions of section 05. Unfortunately, quite a few contributors to this section

did not submit a text in time for inclusion in the present volume while other colleagues could not attend and present their contribution. In addition, the diversity of the contributions All this explains why the general structure and the contents of the present volume do not conform in all details to the programme of the conference.

The present volume has been organized keeping in mind both the complexity of the subject and the general lines of the structure of section 05 of the conference as originally proposed by the organizers. The high degree of diversity of subjects discussed by the authors and speakers made the task of grouping the contributions quite a difficult one, but taking into account a delicate balance between the main thrust of the individual papers and the type(s) of objects considered, This means that the contributions in the present volume have more or less been grouped according to the following topics:

- a first series of papers concerns the secular use of art and includes contributions on the Bayeux Tapestry, aspects of the interior decoration of a French manor, aspect of profane culture in sculpture and a post-medieval garden.
- A number of contributions have been grouped under the general heading 'aspects of style' and consider broader issues such as the perception of early medieval art, several aspects (mainly early) medieval

decoration on metalwork and jewelry, and aspects of medieval sculpture.

- The role of symbolic meanings linked with art, buildings and decorated objects – generally within the framework of religion and belief – is emphasized in three papers brought together in a section titled 'symbols in action'.
- Finally, the papers related to pilgrim badges and presented within the context of the special workshop on these objects and their meanings are grouped under the heading 'sacred and profane badges', which was also the title of the workshop.

Of necessity, the papers are rather short and the volume of course does not do total justice to the many excavations and the wealth of other types of research work where art and symbolism constitute basic issues or are of direct or indirect importance. Nor does it provide a complete overview of the results attained and knowledge acquired. Nevertheless, the 20 papers included in the present volume provide a good idea of the potential of this particular field of research, emphasizing at the same time the complexity of the subject. This is even more true when the volume is considered within the context of the other volumes in the present series and when the reader takes into account that art and symbolism are also very much present – directly or indirectly – in these other volumes.

Frans Verhaeghe & Guy De Boe

Cyril Hart

The Canterbury contribution to the Bayeux Tapestry

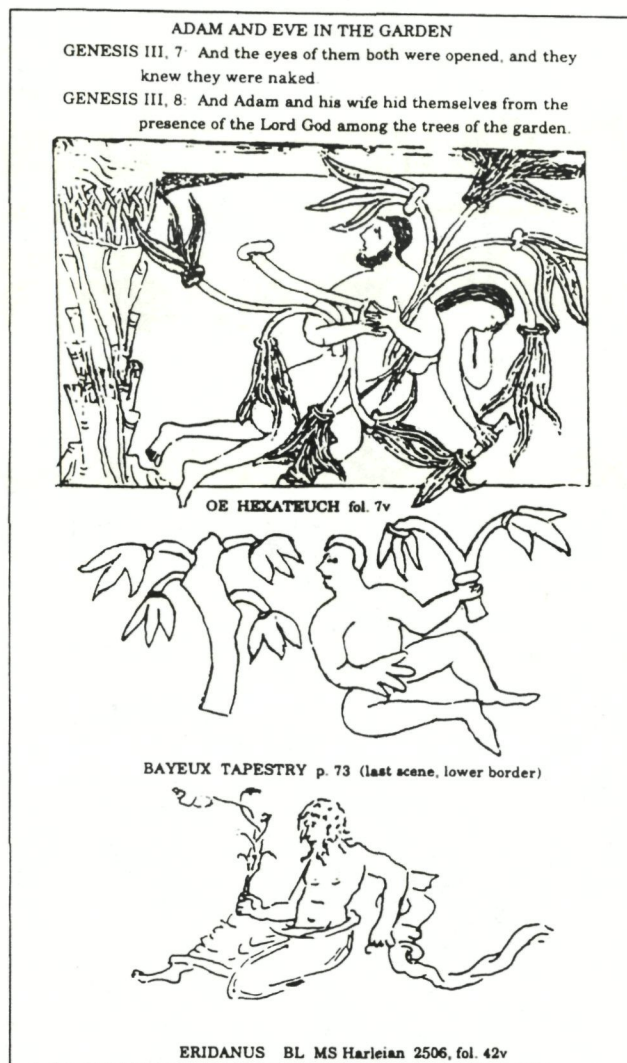


Fig.1.

In spite of considerable research and a voluminous international literature, there is still no general consensus as to the precise date and place of composition of the Bayeux Tapestry.¹ I think that most scholars on both sides of the Channel would now agree that it was designed and executed between 1067 and 1082 somewhere in Southern England, under the patronage of Odo, bishop of Bayeux, who was given the earldom of Kent by his half-brother William the Conqueror soon after the battle of Hastings.² However even this vague consensus is far from complete; for example, a recent claim locates the creation of the Tapestry at Bayeux itself.³

In this paper I put forward the view that the art-historical evidence for the design and manufacture of the Tapestry at St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury is now so extensive and formidable that such a provenance should be taken as an established fact. The evidence accompanies my paper as a series of line drawings, in which *motifs* from surviving early illuminated manuscripts are compared with corresponding scenes copied from the Tapestry. Since the Tapestry scenes undoubtedly originated as line drawings of some kind (possibly charcoal), this method of comparison is more helpful than one using photographic facsimiles. I shall concentrate on those themes (several of them newly-discovered) which are most useful for establishing my thesis, leaving the bulk of the identities found by previous scholars to speak for themselves in the line illustrations.

¹ For the bibliography to 1988, see S.A. BROWN & M. HERREN, *The Bayeux Tapestry: History and Bibliography*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1988. The edition used here is *The Bayeux Tapestry, the Complete Tapestry in Colour*, ed. D.M. WILSON, Phaidon Press, London, 1985, quoted by page number.

² A strong case for the creation of the Tapestry at St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury in 1067 x 1082 was put by N.P. BROOKS, *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bayeux Tapestry*, *Anglo-Norman Studies* 1, 1978, 1-34, but this was admittedly no more than a reasonable assumption at that time.

³ A book now selling world-wide in French, German and English carries the following foreword: 'The prevailing opinion has hitherto been that the Tapestry was made by an English workshop in conquered England. By meticulous and detailed scrutiny of the Tapestry itself, and by reassessing the entire historical and artistic context, Wolfgang Grape, a student of the famous scholars Otto Pächt and Otto Demus, has succeeded in revising this view. In a brilliantly argued exposition, as vivid as a historical novel, he establishes that the Bayeux Tapestry originated in Bayeux itself.' W. GRAPE, *The Bayeux Tapestry*, Prestel-Verlag, Munich-New York, 1994.

Fig. 2.

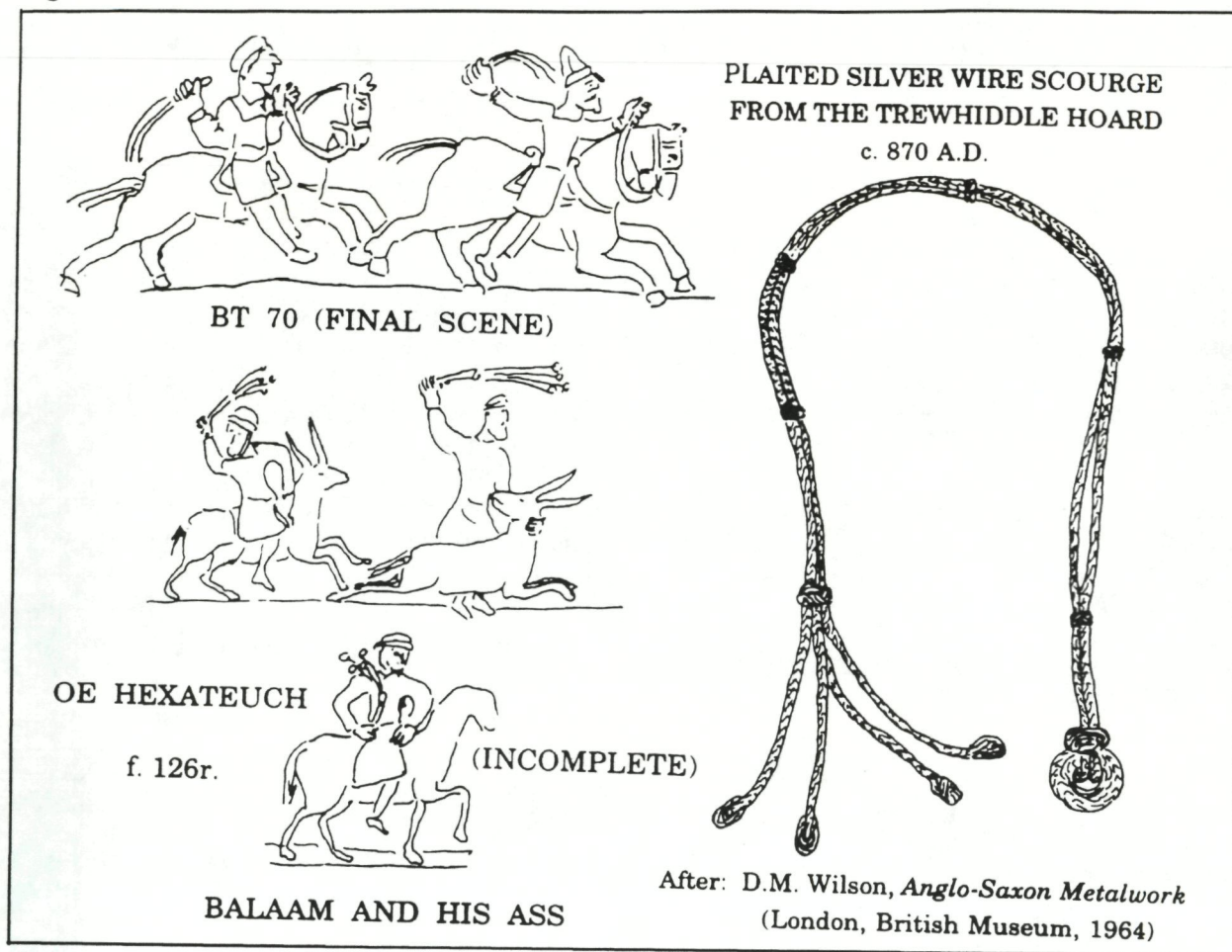
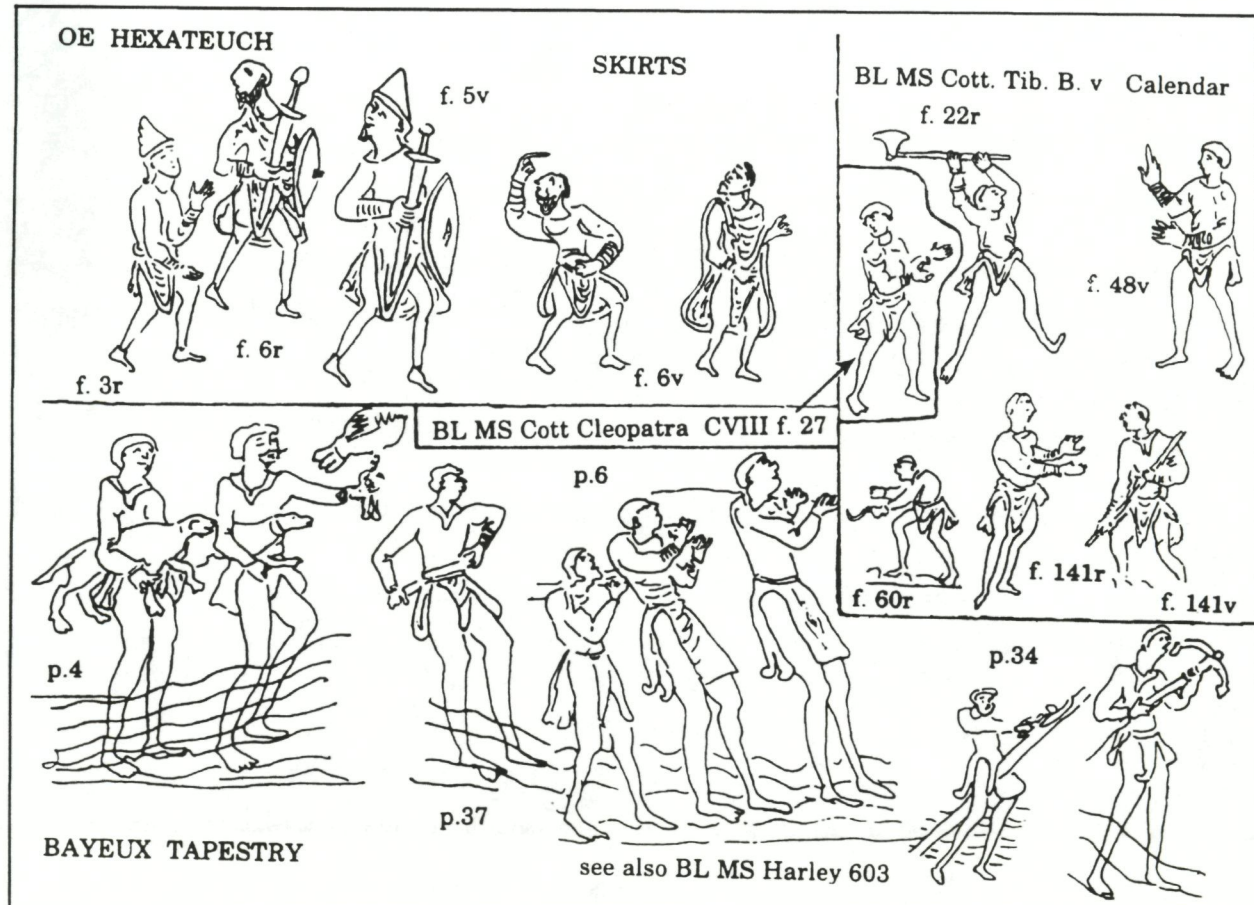


Fig. 3.



The evidence is presented in three parts, each being derived from known Canterbury texts:

1. The Old English Illustrated Hexateuch. BL Cotton Claudius B. iv.⁴

2. An Illustrated Anglo-Saxon Miscellany. BL Cotton Tiberius B.v. Part I.⁵

3. Various other texts from both Canterbury houses (listed below).

⁴ Ed. C.R. DODWELL & P. CLEMOES, *The Old English Illustrated Hexateuch. British Museum Cotton Claudius B. IV. Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile*, Vol. XVIII, Copenhagen, 1974. Using a microfilm, I have embarked on a systematic search to

Fig. 4.

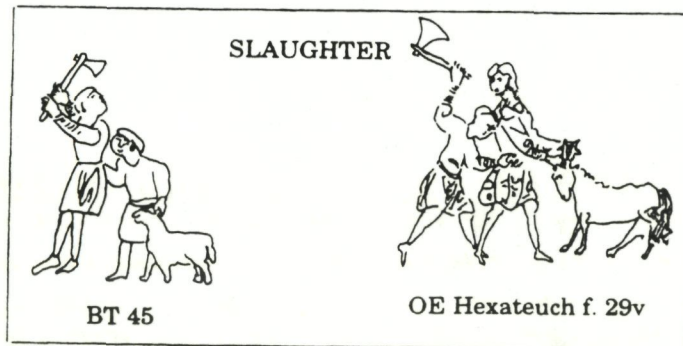


Fig. 7.

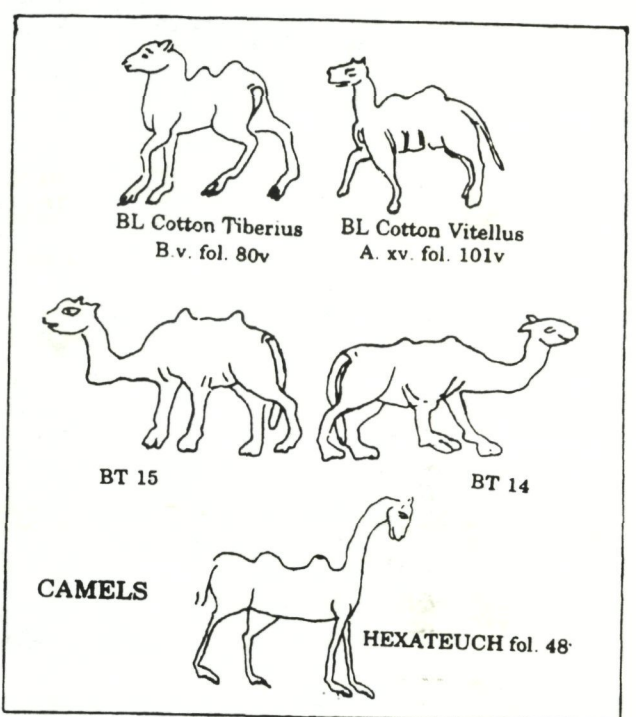


Fig. 5.

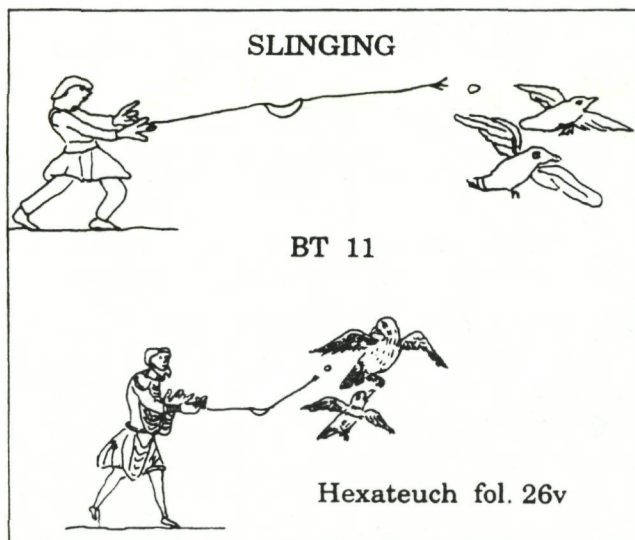


Fig. 8.

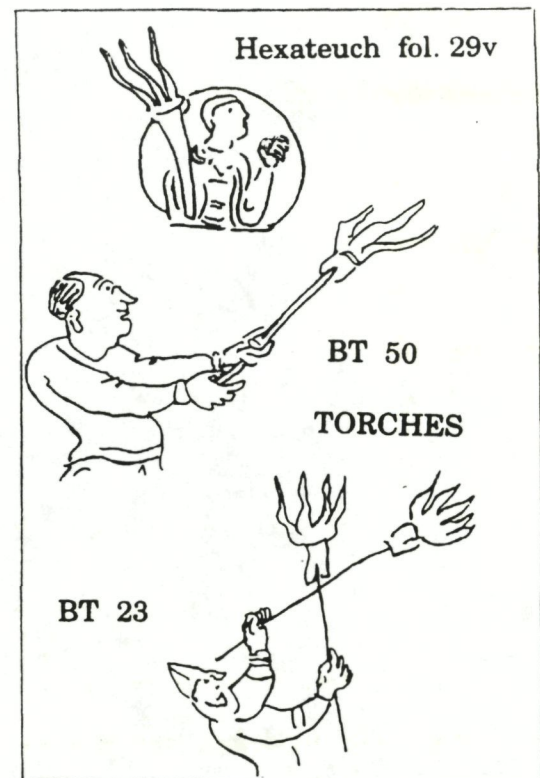


Fig. 6.

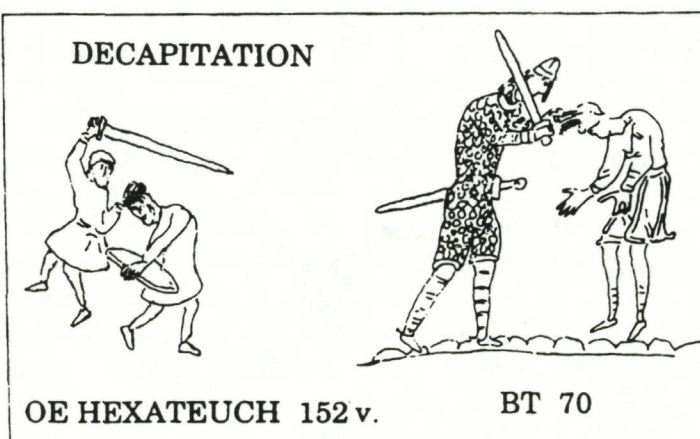


Fig. 9.

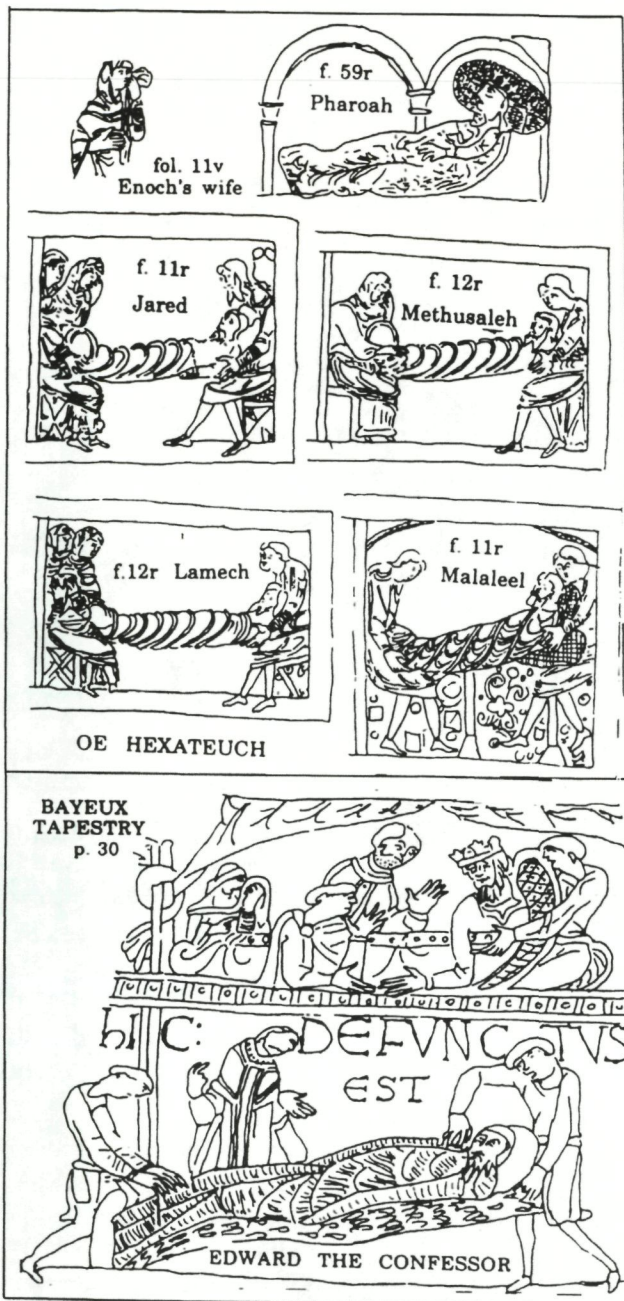


Fig. 10.



Fig. 11.

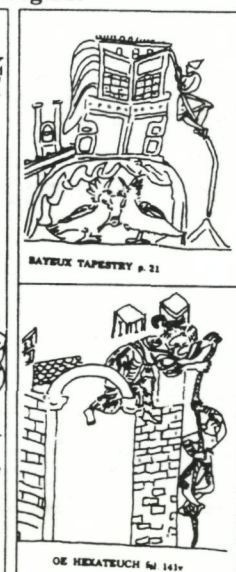
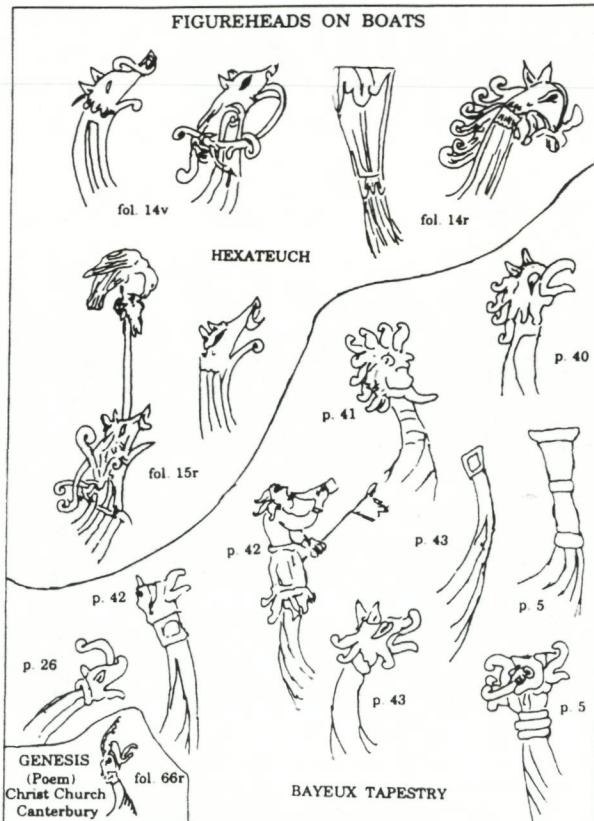


Fig. 12.



The Hexateuch

This is a copy of the earliest Anglo-Saxon translation of the first six books of the Bible, made at St Augustine's Abbey towards the middle of the eleventh century, and kept there until the Reformation. Altogether there are over 550 contemporary pictorial illustrations, all by a single artist but many left unfinished. Professor Dodwell made the point that in each case 'the artist was composing his own picture to conform to the Old English text in front of him, complete with its own idiosyncracies'.⁶ The collection is therefore unique.

As will be seen from Figures 1-14 below, the artist of the Bayeux Tapestry utilised many illustrations from the *Hexateuch*, which was indeed his main manuscript source. I have time and space here to refer to only three examples. The first is the extraordinary scene of a naked man, hiding from the pursuing Normans after the English defeat at Hastings (Fig. 1). This is undoubtedly based on the picture of Adam and Eve hiding their nakedness from God in the Garden of Eden which appears on folio 7v of the *Hexateuch*. Note in the Tapestry version the position of the man's left hand. Note too the plant or branch of a tree held in his other hand. This was taken by the artist from a second exemplar, the figure of Eridanus, a river god in classical times, which illustrates a copy of Cicero's *Aratea* known to have been made at Christ Church, Canterbury c. 1050 (see below). I suggest that

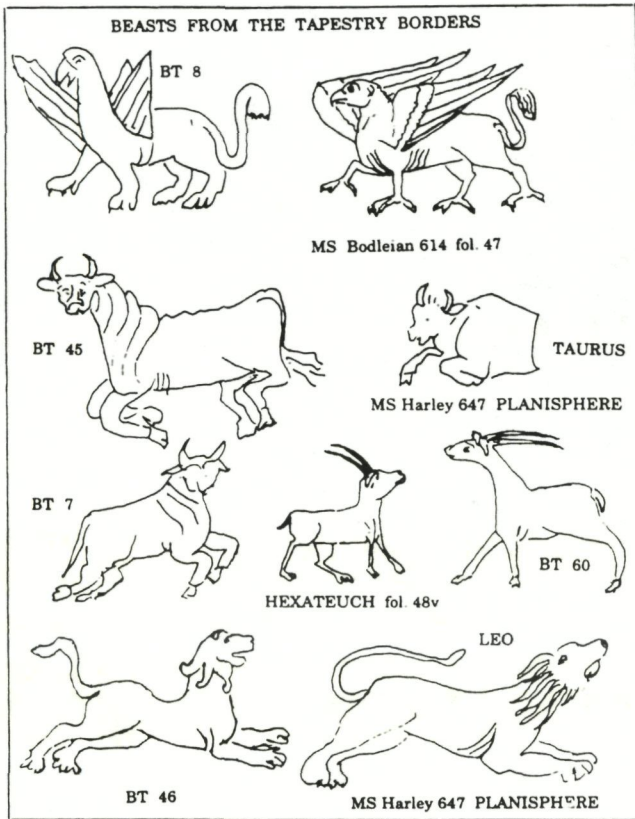


Fig. 13.

Fig. 14.

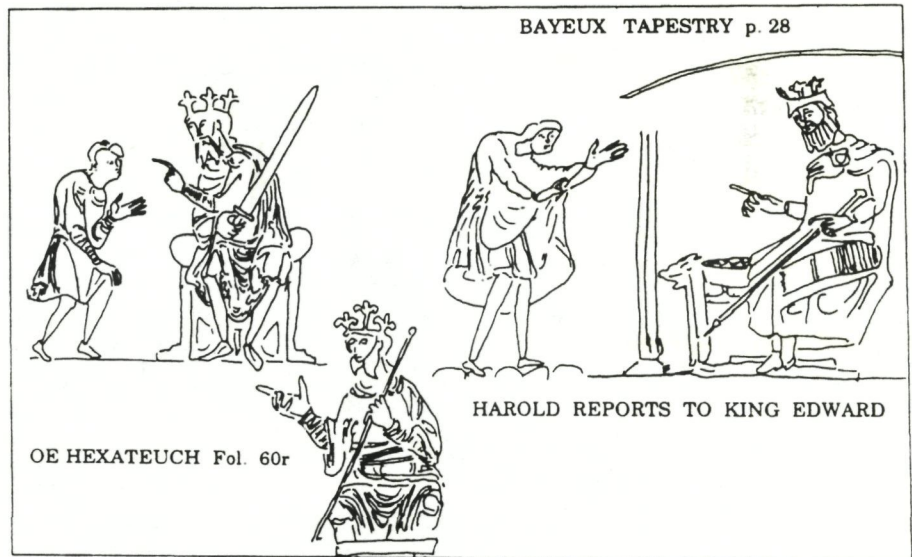


Fig. 15.

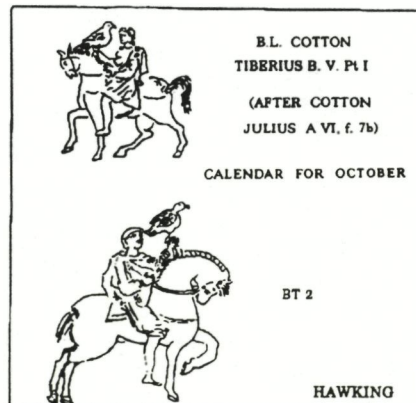
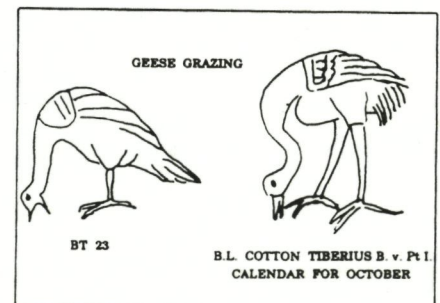


Fig. 16.



establish the full extent of the influence of the *Hexateuch* on the Tapestry. My initial impression is that at least one third of the total number of *motifs* and whole scenes in the Tapestry depend to some degree on the *Hexateuch* illustrations for their design.

⁵ Ed. P. MC GURK, D.N. DUMVILLE, M.R. GODDEN & A. KNOCK, *An Eleventh-Century Anglo-Saxon Illustrated Miscellany. British Library Cotton Tiberius B. v. Part I, together with leaves from British Library Cotton Nero D. II. Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile, Vol. XXI, Copenhagen, 1983.*

⁶ DODWELL, *op. cit.*, 71. Apart from the Bayeux Tapestry itself, there is no evidence that any of these illustrations were ever copied in the medieval period. The unfinished ones certainly remained uncopied.

the combination of *motifs* from books belonging to two different Canterbury monastic libraries to form a single picture makes it highly likely that this Tapestry scene was locally designed.

Immediately above this picture in the Tapestry is a representation of two Englishmen fleeing from the Normans on horseback (Fig. 2). They are urging their horses to greater speed with most peculiar whips, each ending in three strands. Three such 'whips' occur in pictures in the *Hexateuch*, illustrating another well-known biblical story, in which the priest Balaam uses a rod to flog his ass (*Numbers* xx, 23-30). Here the whips have four strands, each ending in a small ringlet. The artist of the *Hexateuch* has taken for his exemplar a plaited silver wire scourge of the type used by monks in self-flagellation. An excellently preserved contemporary specimen survives from the Trewhiddle hoard. Not only are these two sets of pictures in the *Hexateuch* and the Tapestry unique; I am not aware of any other early medieval representation of such scourges, nor of horsemen using whips of any sort. Horsecwhips do not seem to have come into use until the sixteenth century. Before that time, simple sticks may have sufficed. To my mind, even

Fig. 17.

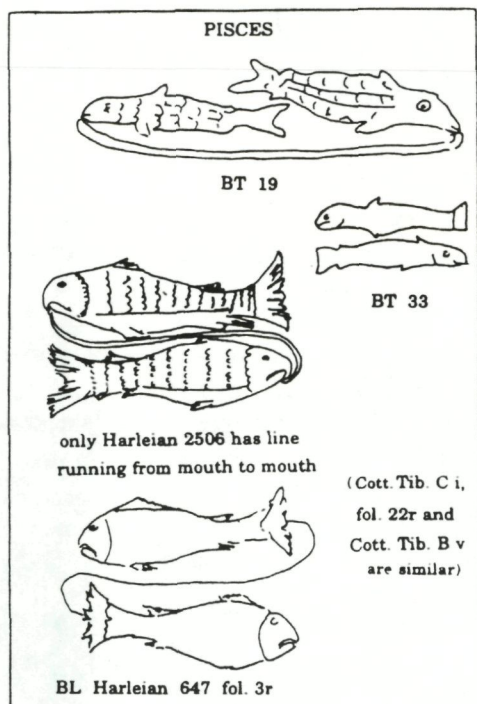
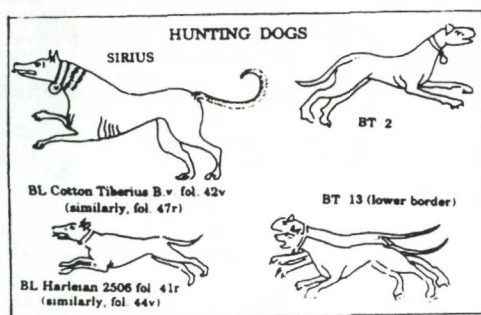


Fig. 18.



if they are considered in isolation the drawings in Figure 2 confirm beyond reasonable doubt that the Tapestry was produced at St Augustine's, and that one of its exemplars was the Old English *Hexateuch*.

Thirdly, the Master of the Bayeux Tapestry used a number of *Hexateuch* illustrations of the deaths of Old Testament monarchs to create his great deathbed scene of Edward the Confessor (Fig. 9). The Confessor's trefoil crown copies that worn in death by Pharaoh; a retainer supports him on a cushion similar to that of King Malaleel; his wife weeps at the foot of the bed just as the wife of King Jared, using part of her veil to wipe her eyes after the fashion of the wife

Fig. 19.

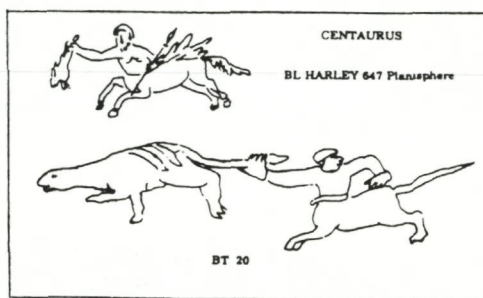


Fig. 20.

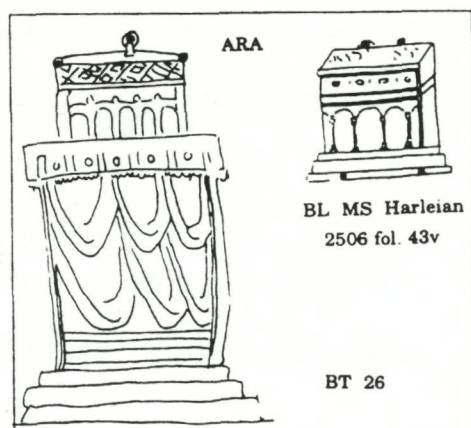
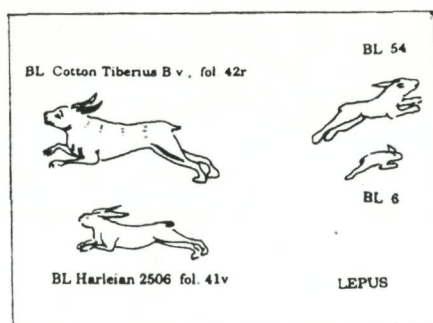


Fig. 21.



of Enoch. Edward's shroud, leaving the head exposed, is also copied from this series of illustrations. As with the picture of the naked man in hiding (Fig. 1), the Bayeux Tapestry Master often drew upon more than one exemplar for each of his illustrations. All were taken from codices kept in the monastic libraries of Christ Church and St Augustine's.⁷

The Canterbury Miscellany

This famous and very varied collection of texts probably reached Canterbury from S.W. Wessex c.

⁷ Both Canterbury scriptoria housed renowned schools of illumination, which reached their apogee around the end of the tenth century; see C.R. DODWELL, *The Canterbury School of Illumination*, Cambridge, 1954. The tradition of the St Augustine's school was the earlier. For the passage of books, scribes and illuminators between the libraries and scriptoria of Christ Church and St Augustine's, see a series of papers from

1957-71 by T.A.M. Bishop listed in an extended study by R. GAMESON, Manuscript Art at Christ Church, Canterbury in the generation after St Dunstan, in: *St Dunstan, his Life, Times and Cult*, edd. N. RAMSAY, M. SPARKS & T. TATTON-BROWN, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1992, 187-220. Much work remains to be done before the relationship between the two centres may be fully appreciated.

990 and was acquired by Battle Abbey early in the twelfth century. While at Canterbury, three picture cycles of mid-eleventh century date were added to the Codex, turning it into one of the most lavishly illustrated of all secular manuscripts surviving from the early Middle Ages. All are by the same artist, working very probably at the scriptorium of Christ Church cathedral, where monks were then cloistered. They will now be described in turn.

A. The Calendar Series

A set of twelve elongated scenes, each heading a monthly calendar, represent the labours of the months and are mostly agricultural in content. There are twelve accompanying medallions showing the signs of

the zodiac. The dependence on these illustrations by the Bayeux Tapestry Master appears in numerous scenes throughout the Tapestry, a few of which are shown in Figures 3, 10, 15 and 16 below. These examples are by no means exhaustive; in particular, the ploughing scene at p. 10 of the lower border of the Tapestry, and the wagon on the same page, are clearly derived from an exemplar close to the Christ Church calendar illustrations. Representations of trees throughout the calendar are copied very closely in the Tapestry, and one remarkable scene involving the use of a sieve as in the December calendar is discussed below.

B. The Marvels of the East

I have not found any example from this series of illustrations in Cotton Tiberius B.v. pt I being copied directly in the Tapestry. However the upper border of pp. 11-12 of the Tapestry shows two unique figures of centaurs with outstretched arms and long hair, which seem to be related iconographically to a particular form of *Homodubii* appearing on fol. 102v of the copy of the OE translation of the *Marvels of the East* entered in Cotton Vitellius A. xv, the famous Beo-

Fig. 22.

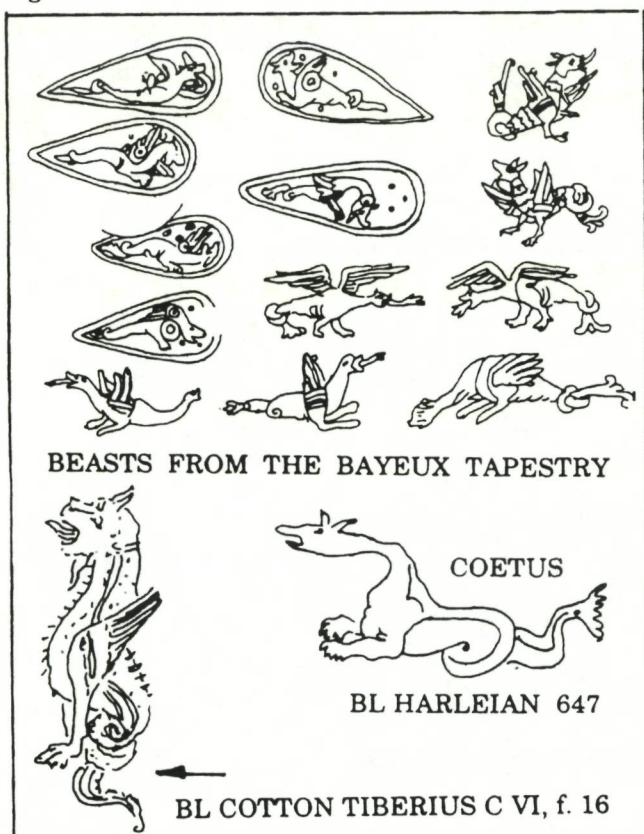


Fig. 23.

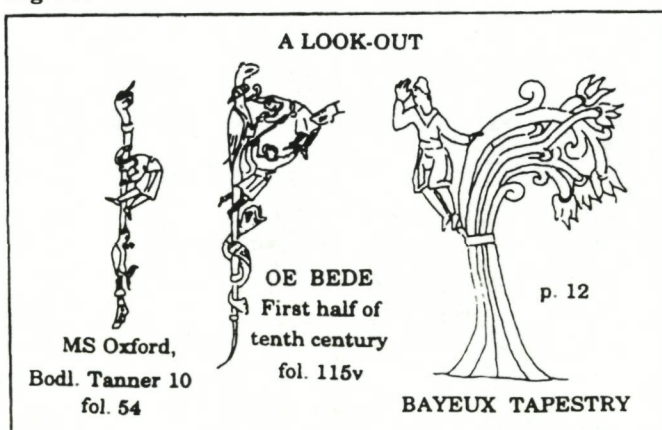


Fig. 28.

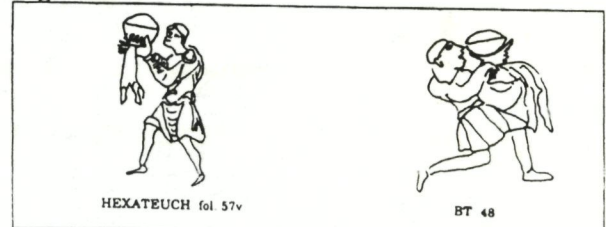


Fig. 29.

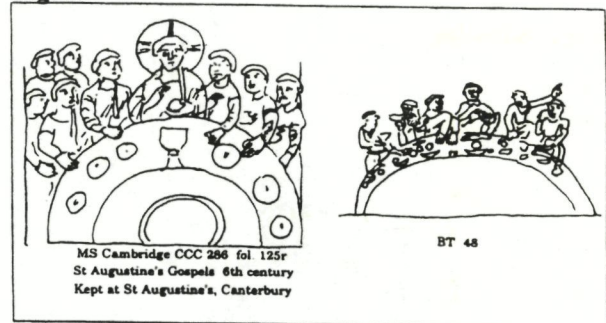
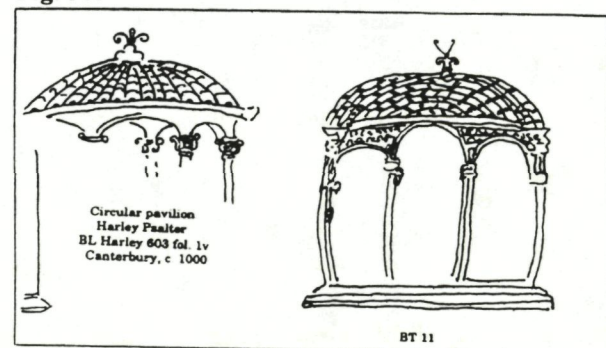


Fig. 30.



wulf Manuscript (see Fig. 27). This dates to the end of the tenth century but unfortunately its provenance remains unestablished. The appearance of these figures in the Tapestry hints at a possible Canterbury association of the Beowulf Manuscript soon after the Norman Conquest.

C. Cicero's verse translation of Aratus

Aratus is a star catalogue of antique origin, in which the illustrations represent named constellations. Apart from the copy in the *Canterbury Miscellany*, the two versions of this illustrated text with which we are concerned are BL Harley 647 and BL Harley 2506. Harley 647 is a Continental manuscript which was completed at St Augustine's Canterbury in the late tenth century and remained there subsequently. It provided an exemplar for the *Canterbury Miscellany*.

Harley 2506 was written at a similar date by Fleury and English scribes; its illustrations are by English artists but its pre-Conquest provenance has not been established. There is no doubt that a series of illustrations in the Bayeux Tapestry were copied from one or more of these texts. I have shown some of them in Figures 1, 13, 17- 22, 24 below, but this list is far from complete. Note the rings attached to the collars of the hunting dogs in Figure 18, to take leashes. In some cases (particularly Figures 19 and 24) the BT exemplar appears to be Harley 647. Nearly all the figures within the oblong Norman shields of the Tapestry may derive ultimately from the Harley 647 *Coetus*. In other cases (notably Figures 17 and 20) the Tapestry item is closer to that of Harley 2506. The most interesting example is the reliquary on p. 26 of the Tapestry, where the three small circular dots on its

Fig. 24.

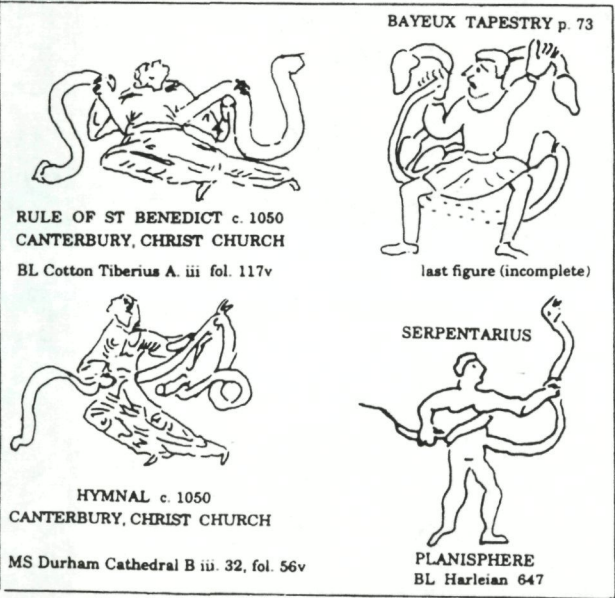


Fig. 25.

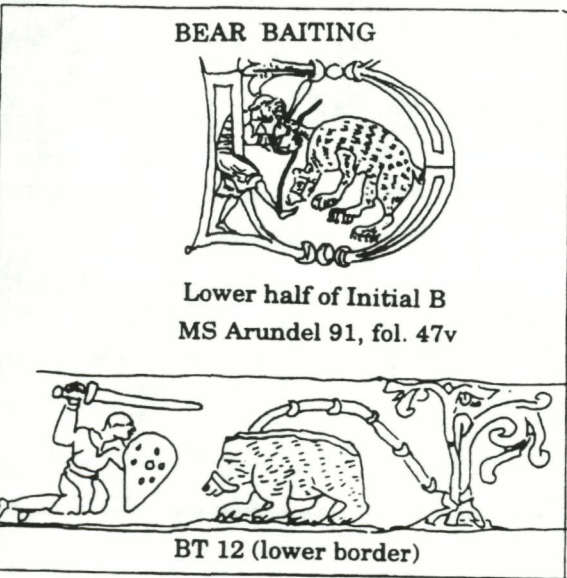


Fig. 26.

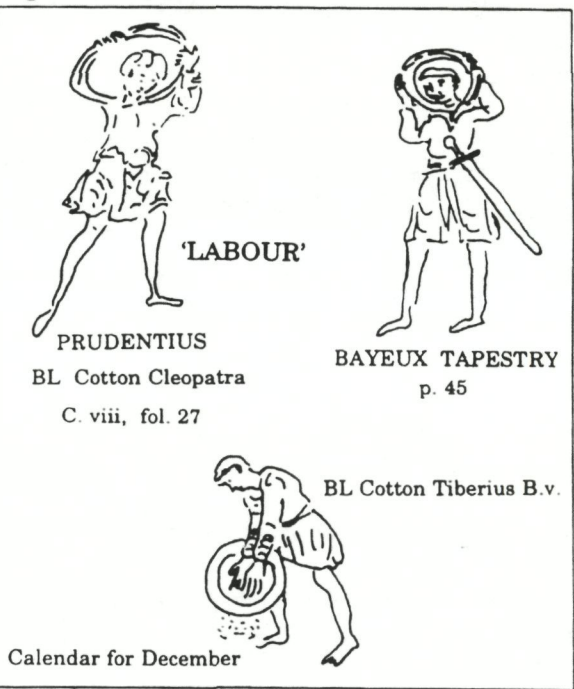
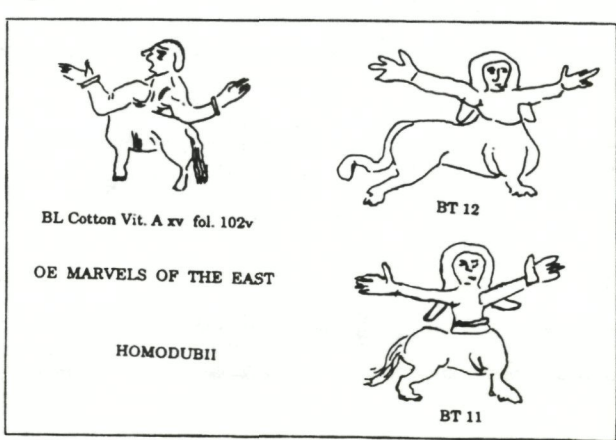


Fig. 27.



upper border represent stars in the Aratus illustration of the constellation *Ara*. A great deal more research into these concordances is desirable.

Various other Canterbury Manuscripts

The Master of the Bayeux Tapestry owed contribution to several other Canterbury codices for his exemplars. I will mention only four of them. The representation of Odo blessing food at a meal before Hastings is likely to depend on the Last Supper scene in the St Augustine's Gospels (Fig. 29).⁸ Bernstein drew attention to the appearance in the Tapestry of an exotic classical pavilion which seems to have been copied from the Harley Psalter (Fig. 30).⁹ The Cædmon Manuscript (Oxford, Junius 11 (5123)) shows on fol. 66r a figurehead on a boat with a peculiar upward extension sprouting from its nose, just as in the Tapestry (Fig. 12). Finally, the Cleopatra *Pruden-*

tius depicts an allegorical figure of 'Labour' carrying a burden which is misrepresented as a sieve in the Tapestry, influenced no doubt by the sieve used for winnowing in the calendar for December in the Canterbury *Miscellany* (Fig. 26).¹⁰

Conclusion

From the time of Francis Wormald's 1954 paper which first suggested stylistic influences from Canterbury manuscripts,¹¹ scholars have been rightly cautious in ascribing the design and execution of the Bayeux Tapestry to a Canterbury artist. Now, after nearly half a century of further research, the evidence for such an attribution is overwhelming. The quality of work of this anonymous illustrator is such that he may fairly be called the Master of the Bayeux Tapestry.

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⁸ BROOKS, *Authority*, 16-17.

⁹ D. BERNSTEIN, *The Mystery of the Bayeux Tapestry*, London, 1986, 42, 44.

¹⁰ The Tapestry figure has been described mistakenly by previous commentators as carrying a coil of rope. Representations of standard *motifs* such as torches, figureheads on ships, and skirts hitched up to the waist, run throughout the

productions of both Canterbury houses and are reproduced at many places in the Tapestry (Figures 3, 8, 12).

¹¹ F. WORMALD, *The Bayeux Tapestry: Style and Design*, in: *The Bayeux Tapestry*, ed. F. STENTON, London, 1954, 25-36; repr. in *F. Wormald, Collected Writings I. Studies in Medieval Art from the Sixth to the Twelfth Centuries*, ed. J.J.G. ALEXANDER, T. BROWN & J. GIBBS, Oxford, 1984, 139-152.

Brian Gilmour & Ian Tyers

Courtrai Chest: relic or recent. Reassessment and further work: an interim report

Introduction

A particularly interesting and unusual object was discovered by chance on an Oxfordshire farm earlier this century. It has been known in England as the Courtrai chest since the identification of the deeply carved scenes on the front panels with the Battle of Courtrai of 1302 (Fig 1). In Belgium it is known both as the Courtrai chest but perhaps more commonly as the Oxford chest (e.g. Verbruggen 1977, 151). Although well known to a few people, the relative obscurity of this object is probably largely because it has very rarely been on public view since it was discovered and moved to where it now is, in the Warden's Lodgings at New College, Oxford.

Finding and initial identification

This chest is reported to have been discovered in a barn of Manor Farm at Stanton St John near Oxford, a property which had been in the possession of New College since the 16th Century (Hayter 1977, 123). It is said to have been found by Warden Spooner during an inspection of college properties in July 1905 and to have been bought from one of the college's copyhold tenants, William Harris, in exchange for writing off £50 rent arrears (ffoulkes 1912, 25; ffoulkes 1914, 113). Nothing more is known of the background to the chest although it was apparently in William Harris' farmhouse some 60 years earlier, i.e. c. 1850 (ffoulkes 1914, 113). The exact date of the finding of the chest may be slightly less certain, as a brass plate inside the lid records that it was not acquired until December 1905.

By 1909 the scenes shown on the front panels of the chest were identified by Charles Oman as representing different stages in the sequence of events covering the Battle of Courtrai which was fought in July 1302, between the Flemish urban militia and the occupying French army (Oman 1924, 114, n1). Charles ffoulkes subsequently carried out a more thorough study of the scenes shown on the front panels, and

this resulted in the identification of the main events plus many details such as the basic identification of some of the guilds whose banners are shown, plus distinctive details of some of the armour and weapons and included some aspects of the heraldry (ffoulkes 1914, 113-128 & Pl. XIV).

Apart from identifying much of what was shown on the front panels ffoulkes also noted in passing that some of the original design was likely to be missing on either side as a result of the carved front panels having been shortened on either side, to remove damaged portions. Apart from this ffoulkes appears to have paid very little attention to what might have happened to the chest later on. Although he made little further comment on the style or possible history of the chest as an object, ffoulkes describes it as being of a 'corn-bin type' type and suggested that the carver of the panels may have come from Ypres, a possibility that has since been discounted.

Physical description

The condition of the chest when it was discovered is unknown and, apart from any repolishing that may have been done, no obvious repairs seem to have been carried since. When viewed from in front the chest appears rectangular and measures 102.5 cm in width by 73 cm high (not including the fairly modern base on which it usually sits). In plan and side views the chest is rather less regular in shape. The back is almost 3 cm shorter than the front so that in plan the body of the chest is actually trapezoidal in shape although this is less obvious as the lid has been made more rectangular. More odd looking is the side view which shows the chest to be roughly rhomboidal in shape in this direction, with both front and back panels sloping backwards from top to bottom, although the slope of the front panel is much less steep and therefore less noticeable than that at the rear. At its base the chest measures approximately 50.5 cm front to back whereas near the top the depth of the chest is approximately 53 cm.

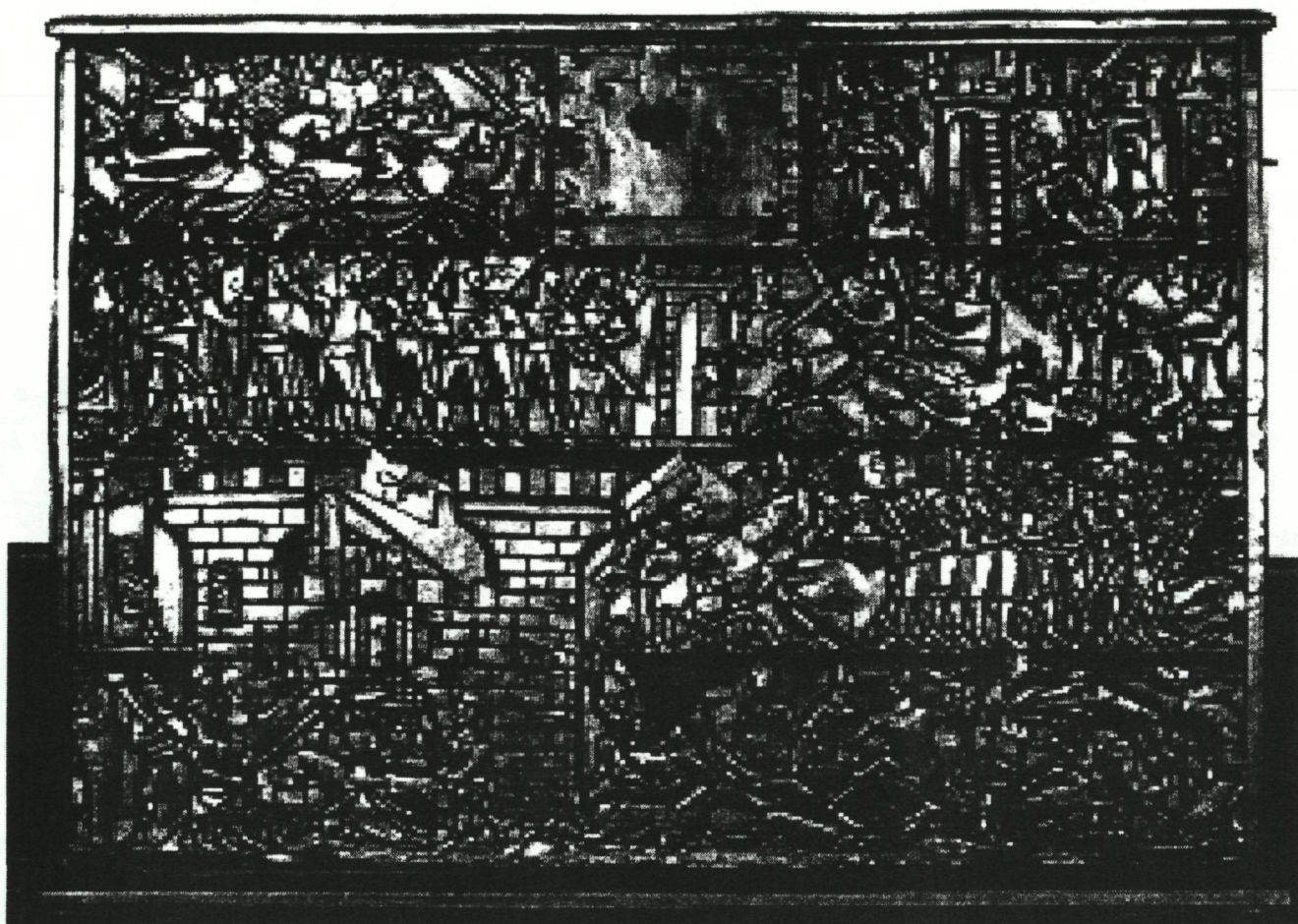


Fig. 1. - *The Courtrai Chest, front view.*

When it was found the only access into the chest was from the top, the main part of the lid of which was hinged near the back. Although the front panels had been nailed to the sides the presence of ring hinges between both the two front panels and between the lowermost panel and the base must soon have suggested the possibility that front panels might once have been able fold down to give access from the front. The front remained nailed to the sides until 1978 when these nails were removed to allow the front panels to be dated by dendrochronological analysis at the Research Laboratory for Archaeology in Oxford (Fletcher 1978). Since then it has been possible to fold down the front panel in two stages, allowing it to be laid flat on the ground (if the chest is removed from its separate, fairly modern base). When upright the lowermost of the two hinged front boards is held in place by plain hooks, one at either end, which fix onto plain iron loops attached to the side boards.

In addition to the ring hinges and hooks (and corresponding iron loops in the side panels) there were various other pieces of ironwork on the chest and these have previously been described and listed (Geddes 1978). Possibly the most striking of these is the plain

rectangular iron lock plate with what appears to be a matching hasp plus strap which was fixed to the underside of the lid (Fig 2). The hasp is of a distinctive form which ends in an oval shape with a projecting square tab, a style which was common in c 1600, an example of which in the Victoria & Albert Museum is dated by inscription to 1605 (Geddes 1978). A row of 6 irregularly shaped and rather crude looking iron plates or straps were fixed to the back of the lower front carved board, apparently as a repair where this had cracked along the base of the uppermost of two similar grooves along the back of the board, these grooves being secondary features seemingly related to the insertion of 2 separate false bases. This repair must post-date the removal of any such false bases.

The opening part of the lid was attached to a narrower, fixed board by two round fishtail strap hinges which extended rather awkwardly beyond the back edge and had been bent at right angles and the ends fixed to the upper back panel. The ring hinges, which enabled the front panel to be folded down, were made of looped pieces of iron, the ends of which projected through the wooden panels and were bent back against the rear face of the boards to form clawlike cramps. Handles had been attached to the side panels and

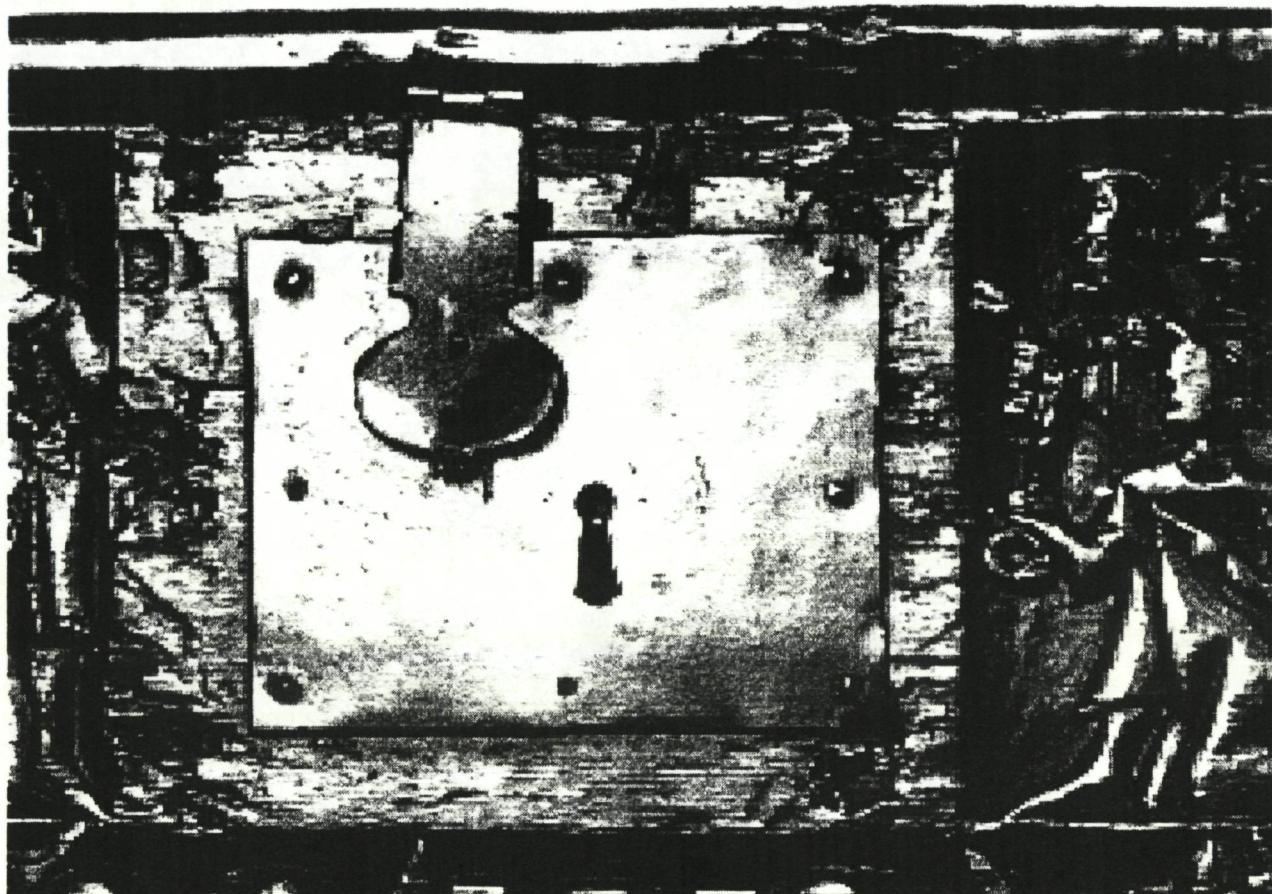


Fig. 2. - *The Courtrai Chest, detail of the present hasp, asymmetrically placed lock-plate and fixing holes likely to belong to an earlier, bigger lock-plate.*

these were fixed to the side panels with similar claw-like cramps to those forming the inner ends of the ring hinges used on the front panels. Various iron nails had been used to fix the main body of the chest together and at least some of these would appear to have been added as subsequent repairs. Similar strap hinges and ring hinges have been found on other chests of the 16th or 17th centuries (Conybeare 1991, 221).

Apart from being off-centre, an obvious feature of the iron lock plate is that it is too small for the plain space left for the lock plate in the top edge of the upper carved front board, and appears to be part of a lock which has replaced a larger lock plate, the fixing holes of which can be seen on either side. The present lock plate masks a slot which still contains a small iron bar possibly belonging to the earlier (?original) lock.

The boards forming the front and back panels of the chest were all quite thick and were made of straight, close-grained oak which had been radially split, giving a distinctive tapering profile in section. By contrast the side panels were made of much thinner, parallel-faced, sawn oak boards which consisted of quite different oak with a much more uneven and less close-grain structure. The boards forming the lid

were similar to those used for the side panels whereas a single board, possibly of elm of a similar thickness and again parallel faced, was used for the base.

It is clear that the boards forming the back panel are joined together with small wooden pegs which can be seen through narrow gaps between the boards. A very similar arrangement of wooden pegs appears once to have been used to join the two wide boards forming the carved front panel. The peg holes can still be seen although the pegs no longer survive, and would in any case have to have been removed or broken off before these front boards would fold up and down following the fitting of the ring hinges. One of the peg holes only partly survives in section at one end of the upper front board, which provides a clear indication that these boards were once longer and supports the suggestion made by ffoulkes that the front panel was once wider and has been shortened at both sides. The plain panel left for the original lock-plate is not now centrally placed which also suggests that the front boards may have had more cut off one end than the other.

Unless this chest was cleverly put together as a fake it is fairly obvious that it has been rebuilt, at least partially, using reclaimed parts from an earlier

chest, before being subsequently altered and repaired. This is suggested by the suspected shortening of the front boards, the likelihood that these originally formed part of a fixed panel, the apparent replacement of the lock and the overall style of the chest in its present form. Reconstruction is also suggested by the use of non-matching wooden boards, only those at the front and back being typical of medieval radially split planks, the rest of the chest being made of much narrower, parallel faced boards which Fletcher suggested were consistent with the reconstruction date of about 1600 suggested by the style of the iron hasp (Fletcher 1978, 18).

Evidence and arguments over dating

There can be no doubt that even if the front panel was carved soon after the Courtrai battle of 1302, there is no way that the chest can be in its original state unless it has been concocted as a fake more recently. Although ffoulkes did not say that the complete chest was original (and, in fact, indicates the opposite by suggesting that the front panel had been shortened) this seems to have been assumed in 1927 when the chest was included in an exhibition of Flemish and Belgian art at the Royal Academy, the catalogue for which describes it as 'beyond doubt the oldest of all the present exhibits' (Marijnissen 1978, 3). The front panels have continued to be quoted as a more-or-less contemporary record of the events that occurred at Courtrai in 1302 (e.g. Verbruggen 1952 and 1978, 151 & Pl. 5; and Nicolle 1995, 161).

It is clear that by the early 1950's there was considerable controversy in Belgium about the authenticity of the chest, and more particularly whether the front panels were a 19th century forgery. Doubts about the authenticity of the carvings of the front panel came out in separate reports in 1952, in one of which Viaene (the editor of the journal *Biekorf*) suggested that the chest might well be a product of what was described as the modern Bruges antiquities industry, and that it was no older than 1860 and more likely to have been made after 1880. In a book review of the same year Scheerder objected to the uncritical acceptance (by Verbruggen in his then very recent book *The Battle of the Golden Spurs*) of the front panel of the chest as iconographic material, although authenticity was defended by an archivist, de Smet, in another short article in the same year (Marijnissen 1978, 4, note 6).

This controversy must have simmered on in Belgium until July 1977 when the chest was displayed in Courtrai. At the time the general opinion would appear to have been in favour of the chest, or at least of a 14th century date for the carving of the front panel,

as the City of Courtrai were attempting to raise the proposed purchase price of £1 m (12 million francs) placed on the chest (De Moor 1978). This price was based on a valuation made by Sothebys and seems very high for what at best appears to be a damaged 14th century carved panel incorporated into a later chest, which would seem to suggest a rather uncritical appraisal of the chest when it was valued.

Before the chest went on display it was examined for a few days in the scientific department of the Royal Institute for National Art Heritage, in Brussels. This enabled only a fairly brief study of the chest to be made although this included X-ray examination and the analysis of traces of reddish pigment trapped in the lowermost recesses of the carved panels. The conclusion of this study was that not only was the chest not an original object of the 14th century, but that it was a later 19th century fake of a pastiche type, including the front panel, and echoed the earlier suggestion that it was probably put together in Bruges (Marijnissen 1978). This conclusion was based largely on the relatively crude construction of the chest plus stylistic objections to the carved scenes on the front panel.

Additional scientific results of this study were largely restricted to the identification of the pigment as lead minium which was claimed to be much more likely to be indicative of a 19th century date as it was commonly used to produce fake antique patination during this period, and that it would have been much less likely to have been used in the 14th century (Marijnissen 1978). This seems a suspect objection as different varieties of red lead minium have been found to be common medieval pigments (Fitzhugh 1986), and miniatures even take their name from the use of this pigment (Bussotti *et al.* 1997).

Although Marijnissen dismissed the chest as a later 19th century fake 'botched together from recovered material', he also suggested that the only possible dates for the carving of the front panel were in the 14th or the 19th centuries, the intervening period being excluded for 'plenty of technical and art-historical reasons'. Marijnissen objected to the overall rather crude style of the carvings, as well as to certain specific details such as the style of the monks habit on the left of the panel, and the whole scene on the lower left, showing the stripping of the dead French knights which he said was not to be expected in the 14th century, but which he suggested was modelled much more recently on a scene from the well known 11th century embroidery, the Bayeux tapestry. Despite his dismissal of this chest as a 19th century forgery there do seem to have been some nagging doubts in Marijnissen's mind about the front panel of which he says that 'strict iconographic and heraldic analyses

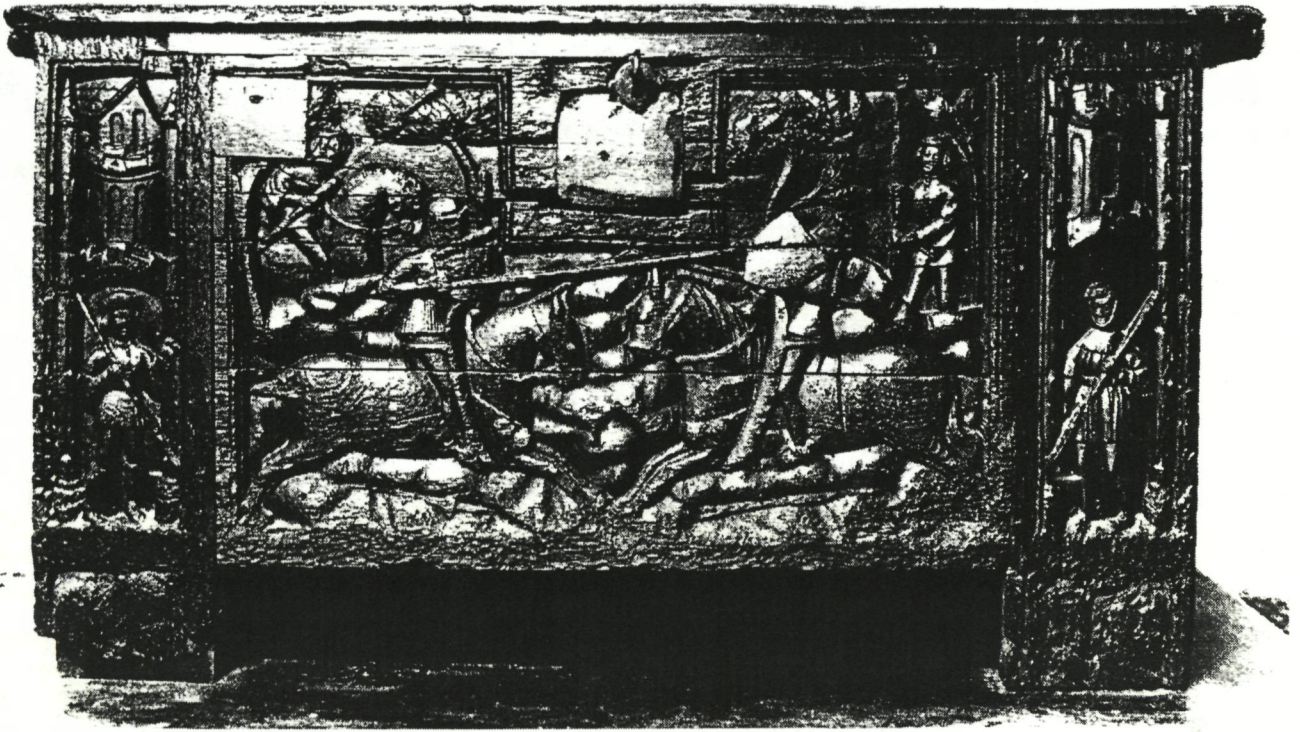


Fig. 3. - *The Harty Chest, showing knights jousting and related scenes.*

may well provide some arguments in favour; possibly even those few surprising details which no forger could have known' (Marijnissen 1978, 11).

Included as an addition to Marijnissen's account was a report of the dendrochronological work carried out at the Oxford University Research Laboratory for Archaeology in 1978 after the chest had been returned to England (Fletcher 1978, 18-21). The end grain of both front boards was examined (once the nails previously preventing the front panel being opened had been removed) but this report included only the combined results for both ends of the upper board which yielded a total of 274 rings with a date sequence of 970-1243 AD. Allowing for the absence of sapwood and whatever heartwood might be missing, Fletcher estimated that the tree from which this board came could not have been felled before about 1270 AD. He reports (based on his own work) that intervals of about 50 years 'between the latest ring and the date of use are general for Westminster chests of the period'.

This dating sequence was achieved by matching the combined results for the upper board with two sets of reference curves, firstly the reference curve built up from chests in Westminster Abbey and, secondly the Central German oak reference curve for the period 832-1960 AD. Fletcher accepted ffoulke's conclusion that the front panel was carved in Flanders soon after 1302 and himself concludes that these dendrochronological results provide independent evi-

ence that the carved board examined would have been used soon after the battle. He also suggests that certain differences in 'signatures' between the tree ring sequence of the panel and the Westminster and German curves are consistent with the panel coming from a tree grown somewhere in or near Flanders, geographically between SE England and Hesse (Fletcher 1978, 19). The presence of a large knot distorted the ring sequence of the lower board and consequently this was not used in this report although it was later reported as having a sequence of 234 rings and dated to 983-1216 AD (Hall 1987, 106; Fletcher & Tapper 1984, 122-3).

As mentioned above, Fletcher's 1978 report (20-21, Appendix A) included a brief report on the ironwork by Dr Jane Geddes in which she dated the hasp of the secondary lock to c 1600. Fletcher concluded from this, as well as his own results, that ffoulke's was correct in deducing that the front panel was carved in Flanders, and formed a more-or-less contemporary record of the events of 1302 but was subsequently incorporated as part of a new chest made in about 1600. He also suggested that comparison with the carved panels on two chests of about 1300 (one in the Musée de Cluny, Paris, and the other a Westphalian chest now in Berlin) indicates that the front panel of the Courtrai chest had been shortened by about 30 cm on each side. Fletcher went on to give what he regarded as a feasible subsequent history for the chest:

'The history of the period from 1302 to 1600 suggests that when the French occupied Courtrai in 1382, they found the scenes of their earlier defeat depicted on the original chest, distasteful and ordered it to be destroyed. Though the chest was doubtless broken up, this central panel might well have been hidden and so preserved. Much later, perhaps when Elizabeth I was providing military help to enable the Netherlands to resist the overlordship of the Spaniards in the middle 1580's, its existence could have come to the attention of a member of her army stationed there. It is feasible to suggest in such circumstances [that] it was brought to England and used for making a domestic chest of the type then in much demand. Again much later, and sometime before c 1850, the panel was roughly nailed to the sides of the chest which passed into use as a corn bin on the farm at Stanton St John leased by New College, Oxford.' (Fletcher 1978, 19).

Although there seems to be no basis for this rather fanciful reconstruction of what might have happened to the chest after the early 14th century, Fletcher's dendrochronological dating results for the front panel clearly indicate a later 13th or early 14th century date for the front boards. This, together with his and ffoulkes' observations on the rest of the chest, including the stylistic dating of the hasp form the basis of what seems to be a quite reasonable suggestion, that a cut down carved panel from an earlier chest was incorporated into the present chest in about 1600. More surprising is that the reports by Fletcher and Geddes should have been added to the end of Marijnissen's report without there being any additional comment on their content, particularly since this directly contradicts Marijnissen's own main conclusion that the whole chest, including the front panel is likely to be a later 19th century forgery.

This contradiction was pointed out soon afterwards in a very detailed study of the chest (entitled *The Oxford Chest*) in which all Marijnissen's objections were examined (and rejected), and which looked carefully at the construction and style of the chest as well as thoroughly investigating the iconographic and heraldic details shown on the front panel (Dewilde *et al.* 1980). The authors countered one of Marijnissen's most basic worries, that the style of the front panel had no obvious parallels, by illustrating (Fig. 18, p. 190) a 1361 seal of the Bruges guild of cabinet makers which shows a representation of a wooden chest with a decorated front divided in much the same way into horizontal strips.

The seal shows a hutch form of chest with boards projecting downwards, on either side of the main central part, so as to form the feet of the chest, al-

though the decoration is shown running right from one side to the other. The plain area for a comparatively large lock-plate and what seems a disproportionately long hasp are also clearly visible. This overall form of chest (if not the strip cartoon style of carving) can be found in complete surviving examples of 14th century Flemish chests, two very similar examples of which both have deeply carved front panels although these are divided into three parts (Porter 1979, 135).

One of these is in Ypres cathedral and features St George slaying the dragon whereas the chest in Harty church on the Isle of Sheppey, in Kent, shows knights jousting (Fig 3). These main scenes are carved on horizontal boards and each case are flanked by much narrower subsidiary scenes carved into single, vertical boards which project further downwards to form the front feet of the chest, a design which gives the hutch-like appearance. The Ypres chest also has a long hasp, similar to that shown on the 14th century Bruges seal, and also the lock-plate more-or-less covers the space left for it in the uncarved area which, in both these chests, is very symmetrically placed in the centre of the top of the design. The hasp and lock of the Harty chest have not survived.

If the carved panel of the Courtrai chest really is the surviving part of the main front panel from an early 14th century chest, then some idea of its possible original form can be gauged from the illustration on the Bruges seal as well as surviving chests such as those from Ypres and Harty. There is, however, little point in speculating further on the possible appearance of the original chest until the authenticity (or otherwise) of this front panel can be established beyond reasonable doubt which in this case requires both the scientific and art historical evidence to be sufficiently detailed and convincing to answer any lingering doubts. Fortunately, in the different scenes making up the carved front panel of the Courtrai chest there is so much detail shown that can be examined for anything inconsistent with an early 14th century date that it should be possible to make a good case for or against this carved panel on art historical grounds alone. This would be almost impossible without detailed and extensive access mainly to Flemish archives and relevant late medieval illustrative sources, such as miniatures, decorated objects and so on.

We are fortunate that the Belgian authors of *The Oxford Chest* have carried out an exhaustive study which went far beyond the already quite detailed description given by ffoulkes in 1914, with the addition of much art historical evidence supporting an early 14th century date for the carving of this panel (Dewilde *et al.* 1980, 165-256). It appears that much of the art historical evidence given in this study –



Fig. 4. - *The Courtrai Chest, detailed view of scene 5, lower, centre right of front panel.*

much of which has entailed very detailed iconographic and heraldic research would not have been available a faker in the early part of this century. Given the great amount of identifiable detail shown it seems almost inconceivable that someone trying to invent these scenes in the later 19th century (as suggested by Marijnissen and others) could have done so without making at least some identifiable anachronistic mistakes and yet the evidence given in the Oxford Chest convincingly argues this to be the case.

However unlikely, it be argued that there is still a possibility that this degree of accuracy of detail could have been achieved by one or more academically able researcher/forgers in the later 19th century. Once the results of dendrochronological analysis of the front panel became known, Fletcher's estimate of the boards actually being used in the early 14th century seems have been accepted, although it was then suggested that this dating of the wood did not demonstrate the antiquity of the carving and simply meant that old boards had been used (de Moor 1978, 20-21). The likelihood that uncarved old boards of exactly the right date would have been available to a later 19th century faker seems extremely small, especially given that there was no known method of dating wood at that time and so a faker would need to have been extraordinarily fortunate in his choice of old wood to get the dating as accurate as this. Even nowadays it is hard to see a faker being able to achieve this.

Fletcher and Tapper also produced a dendrochronological date range for the lower of the two front

boards on the Courtrai chest although this was not quoted until the publication of the results of further scientific dating work on the top board. Drillings were taken separately from near the latest and earliest rings showing on the end grain of the top board and these were dated using the small-sample, accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) method of radiocarbon 14 age determination, which was carried out in 1985, again at the University of Oxford, Research Laboratory for Archaeology (Hall 1987, 104-107). The idea behind this further dating work was to test the earlier dendrochronological results, and although Fletcher previously did not to give the results for the lower board, 234 rings were counted and dated to 983-1216. There is a good overall measure of agreement between the two dating methods for the top board although the AMS results appear to be a few years later than expected (Hall 1987, 106-107).

Although the AMS radiocarbon dating generally supported the tree-ring dates given by Fletcher, this still left the origin of the wood unclear, as no clear match had been achieved with either the English or German reference curves, and Fletcher did not specify what he meant by certain differences in 'signatures' between the ring sequence of the panel and that of these reference curves being consistent with the panel coming from the intermediate area of Flanders. Since Fletcher and Tapper carried out their dendrochronological study a much more complete series of reference curves has been built up together with other

improvements in the technique. With this in mind, it was decided as part of the present study of the chest, that these same front boards should be re-submitted to tree-ring analysis both to test the reliability of Fletcher's results, and attempt, more convincingly, to determine the origin of the oak used for this panel.

Only the top board was successfully dated although this proved more of a problem than expected, at least until it finally proved possible to match the ring sequence to an existing tree-ring reference curve, which in this case turned out to be one from southern Sweden. The results also indicate that Fletcher's dates may be a bit too early, although it still seems highly likely that this board was used in the early part of the 14th century. One other consequence of this adjustment in the tree-ring dating for the front panel is that the agreement between tree-ring and AMS radiocarbon dates is now about as close as can be expected. This work is still in progress and will be more fully reported as and when the results are ready. It is clear, however, that the wood for the front panel of the Courtrai chest did not come from anywhere near Flanders, as Fletcher rather unconvincingly tried to suggest. Even before being subjected to tree-ring dating, a narrow but very straight-grained oak, such as is used in this board, now would be suspected as a late medieval export from the Baltic area. This dating plus the fact that the wood for this panel comes from southern Sweden are clear indications that it predates the period from nearer the mid 14th century when the cartel operated by the Hanseatic League was at its height, during which time most straight-grained oak for panels and the like, is usually found to have come from the eastern Baltic region.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to mention more than briefly what is shown in the 7 individual scenes carved on the front panel of the Courtrai chest or the detail that can be interpreted from them. The events shown have been identified as covering the days before, during and after 11th July, 1302 when the actual battle was fought on the marshy ground outside the walls of Courtrai, and which resulted in a disastrous defeat for the French army. A good description of the main events, based partly on a contemporary accounts, was given by ffoulkes (1914, 113-128) and, as already stated, a very detailed discussion of the art-historical detail shown is given in *The Oxford Chest* (Dewilde *et al* 1980). Apart from the great mass of iconographic and heraldic detail which seems to be depicted accurately on the front panel, the few mistakes in some of the details which do occur (such as meaningless roundals shown on one or more shields, and the single fleur-de-lys where many should have been shown on the banner of the French garrison inside Courtrai) are the kind of casual mis-

takes or short-cuts that might be expected from a contemporary carver. Not only do there not seem to be the kind of anachronistic mistakes which are difficult to avoid when creating a detailed and complex pictorial representation of a series of historical events such as this, but rather the opposite seems to be true and some of the detail has turned out to be unexpectedly consistent with changing stylistic or chronological details.

Marijnissen suggested that one of the main sources of inspiration for the front panel was likely to have been a series of wall paintings discovered in 1846 in a former medieval chapel in Ghent known as the Leugemeete (or 'liar' because the time shown on its clock was always wrong!), then in use as a brewery depot which was demolished in 1911 (Marijnissen 1987, 9-10). These wall paintings, dated to the mid 14th century, show various representations of the Ghent militia details some of which, while similar to examples shown on the front panel of the Courtrai chest, seem to be stylistically later. For instance the style of decorated ailettes (shoulder guards) shown, complete with heraldic details on the front panel went out of fashion by *c* 1330 and do not feature on the Leugemeete frescoes. These frescoes show the Ghent militiamen wearing slightly, but distinctly conical helmets whereas those on the carved panel are hemispherical. In particular, the form of iron-shod spiked club, the *goedendag*, shown in quantity on the frescoes is distinctly longer and narrower than those shown on the carved panel, the shorter, wider form being earlier by comparison with examples shown in stained glass windows (Dewilde *et al* 1980).

The extent of the detail on the front panel can be judged from scene 5 (right, lower centre) in which the leaders of the Flemish militia, Guy of Namur and William of Jülich, can be identified by their decorated ailettes (shoulder guards) and other details (Fig. 4). Also shown on this scene is the escutcheon of the Flemish (national) leader, Pieter de Coninc, and the banners of several Flemish craft guilds which can be identified (left to right) as representing the guilds of brokers (simplified to 2 pales by the use of 4 vertical lines), masons (set square and trowel), and the smiths (hammer and horseshoe). To the right of these are several more banners. The next shows a lion, possibly the banner of Flanders, then comes the banner of the carpenters guild (axe and set square), next to which is a banner showing another lion, identifiable by a fleur-de-lys on its shoulder, as that of William of Jülich. The next banner shows a cross engrailed, identifiable either as representing Henry of Lontzen (Marshal of Bruges) or the crossbowmen. Finally another lion banner (partly masked by a ring hinge) is this time identifiable by the (just visible) bendlet

engrailed as belonging to Guy of Namur (Dewilde *et al* 1980).

The identity of the mounted knight charging into the Flemish ranks in scene 3 (right, upper centre) has only recently been narrowed down to John the Merciless, son of the Count of Hainault, who is shown carrying the Flemish coat of arms because of his claim to the county of Flanders (Putseys pers. comm.). In scene 6 (left, lower) the Flemish militiamen shown covering the gate to the Courtrai garrison are shown wearing tunics marked with a simple patriarchal cross (with 2 cross bars), which was the symbol for Ypres only until sometime later in the 14th century when this was merged with other heraldic devices as is shown on Albrecht de Vriendt's *Victorious Return of the warriors of Bruges after the Battle of the Spurs in 1302*. This was part of a set of murals commissioned as part of the restoration of Bruges City Hall of 1889-1905, murals which contain various examples of just the kind of anachronistic mistakes that might be expected from any would-be faker of the period (Dewilde 1980).

There seems to be a good measure of agreement that the carved panel of the Courtrai chest originated in Bruges even if Marijnissen and others think it was carved in the later 19th century and Dewilde and colleagues have assembled a great deal of art-historical evidence in favour of its having been carved soon after the events of 1302. The scientific dating evidence indicates the early 14th century as the likely time when the boards were used. A combination of art-historical and scientific factors provides what seems to be an almost overwhelming case for the front panel being a genuine surviving fragment from the front of an early 14th century chest. The present hasp, handles as well as the different hinges used and the overall form of the chest as it now is, would appear to date from about the early 17th century. It is unknown who might have commissioned a chest decorated like this originally but there seems at least a slight possibility that it came to England quite early on, perhaps brought over by a member of the St John family, John de St John having been summoned for service in Flanders in 1297 (White, GH 1982, 324-5). If so, it could have remained and been reconstructed locally in Stanton St John, part of the surviving manor house of which dates to the beginning of the 14th century. Work on this chest is continuing and will be reported in due course.

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Un manoir péri-urbain et son décor peint du XIV^e siècle

Cette communication est le résultat d'un long travail de recherche collectif qui verra son aboutissement dans la publication d'un ouvrage complet qui paraîtra probablement l'année prochaine¹. Le texte présenté ici est un résumé du chapitre 4 "Le carrousel avant Paris, le Moyen Age avant la ville – Un manoir péri-urbain du XIV^e s."

1 Introduction

Les restes d'une demeure péri-urbaine du XIV^e s. ont été mis au jour dans la partie S.-E. du site, sous l'ancienne place du Carrousel.

Construit sur le bourrelet alluvial en bordure de Seine, l'édifice occupe un point culminant. Vers le sud il domine directement le fleuve et le chemin sur berge le longeant. Vers le nord, le versant naturel en pente douce a été accentué par la dépression locale provoquée par l'extraction de limon à l'époque romaine.

Les maçonneries sont dérasées sous les niveaux de sols et les fondations sont très souvent récupérées. Seuls subsistaient quelques tronçons de murs, les tranchées de récupération comblées de débris divers et les aménagements souterrains. Ce mauvais état de conservation résulte de la construction de l'enceinte urbaine dans la seconde moitié du XIV^e s. Située sur le tracé de cette dernière, la bâtisse est détruite pour faire place au nouvel ouvrage défensif. Son emplacement est recouvert en grande partie par les terres accumulées pour la construction du rempart et par un chemin longeant son piétement. D'autres destructions sont provoquées par des constructions élevées à cet endroit durant les Temps modernes. Les plus anciennes remontent au XV^e s. et appartiennent à une extension du clos de la Petite Bretagne. Les constructions qui ont occasionné le plus de dégâts sont celles de l'hôtel de Warin- Beringhen, datées des XVII^e et XVIII^e s. Toute la partie occidentale de la zone fouillée a été profondément terrassée pour l'établissement de plusieurs caves, alignées sur le mur d'escarpe de l'enceinte. Enfin, les travaux du Grand Louvre, en 1986, ont entraîné de nouvelles destructions, cer-

tainement les plus importantes. La pose d'un collecteur d'égout et l'installation d'une centrale à béton ont complètement perturbé les parties centrale et orientale de la zone, jusqu'alors épargnées.

2 Description et chronologie

Le plan d'ensemble de la demeure est incomplet (fig.1). De nombreuses incertitudes subsistent et la restitution reste largement hypothétique. Le bâti présente une disposition en "U", comprenant trois corps de bâtiment disposés autour d'une cour (IV) ouverte au sud, vers la Seine (fig. 2). Le premier bâtiment (I), à l'ouest, est orienté N.-S.; le second, au nord (II), est orienté E.-O. Les perturbations modernes ne permettent plus de savoir si ces deux corps de bâtiment étaient ou non indépendants. Un troisième ensemble de constructions, à l'E., se rattache au second et lui est perpendiculaire, il constitue une aile orientale (III).

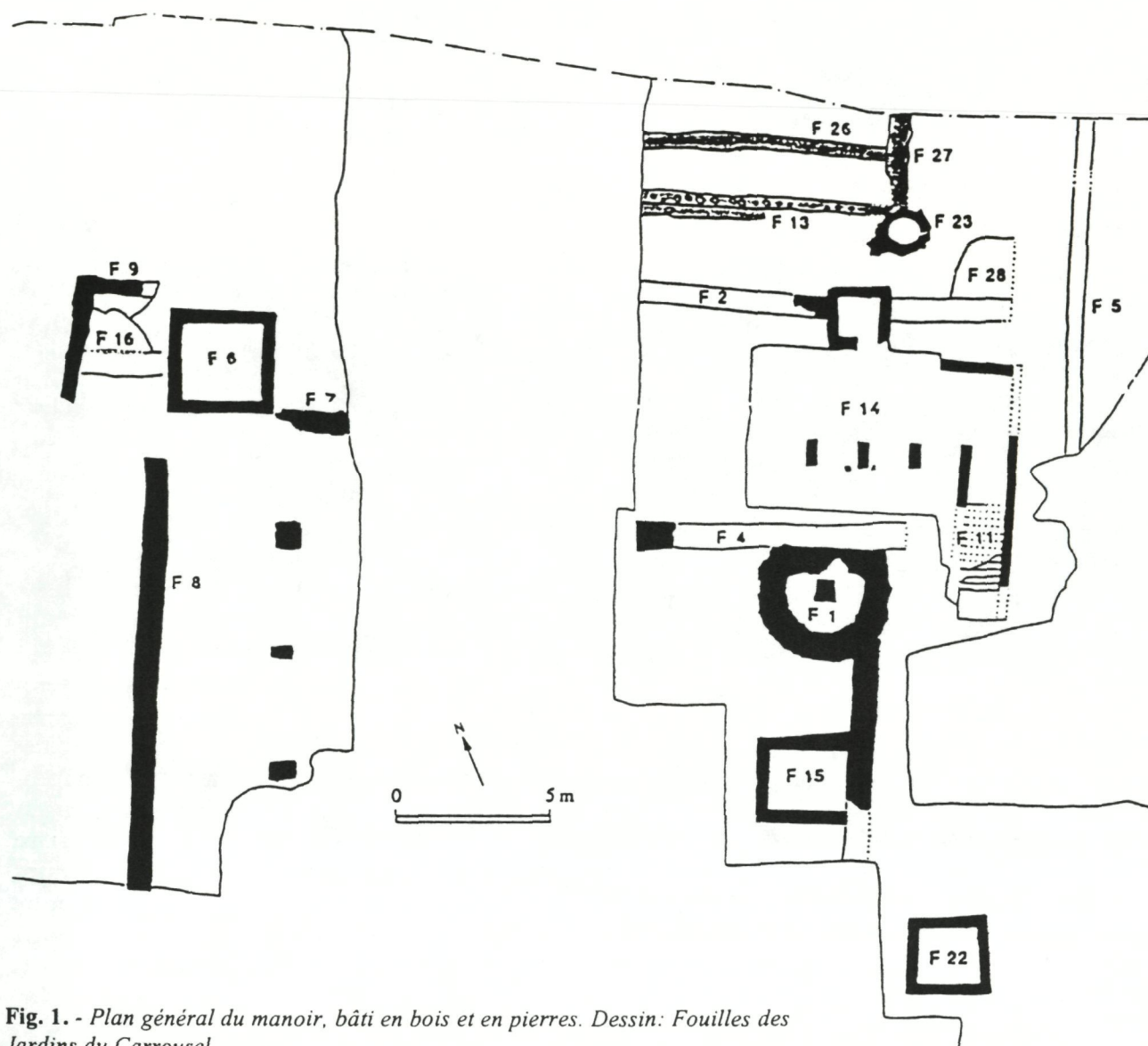
Le corps de bâtiment occidental (I)

Il comprend une vaste pièce rectangulaire, une fosse d'aisances accolée au nord et une construction quadrangulaire, ajoutée tardivement.

Le plan de cette construction, conservée sur une largeur de 7,50m et sur une longueur de 16m, reste incomplet; seules subsistent ses limites occidentales (F8) et septentrionales (F7).

Ces éléments permettent deux reconstitutions différentes. Soit une vaste salle, large de 10m peut-être et longue d'au moins 16m, divisée en deux nefs, comprenant quatre travées minimum. Sa superficie devait atteindre environ 160m², soit une galerie couverte sur arcades, large de 5m et d'une superficie moitié moindre.

¹ VAN OSSEL P. (dir.), *Grand Louvre (Paris) - Les jardins du Carrousel - De la campagne à la ville: formation d'un espace urbain*, DAF, Paris, à paraître.



La construction peut être datée de la première moitié du XIV^e s. par un petit lot de céramique trouvé dans la tranchée de fondation du mur F7.

Le bâtiment I possède, à son extrémité nord, une structure enterrée (F6) de forme quadrangulaire, mesurant 3,50m sur 4,30m. Elle est profonde de 3,60m et recouverte par une voûte en plein cintre. Les murs ne sont conservés que sur les quatre ou cinq assises inférieures, faites de moellons calcaires liés indifféremment au plâtre ou au limon. Chainés et parementés, ils sont enduits de plâtre. La poussée des terres a provoqué une forte déformation des parois, bombées vers l'intérieur de la structure.

Un lit de sable d'assainissement et une couche de matière organique tapissant le fond permettent d'identifier clairement une fosse d'aisances. Un cône de déjection, encore visible contre le mur sud, indique l'emplacement d'un conduit de chute placé contre le mur nord du corps de bâtiment I.

A l'extérieur de F6 se trouvent deux fosses en pleine terre. Leur lien avec la fosse d'aisances n'a pu être mis en évidence.

Ces deux fosses sont recoupées par l'adjonction de deux murs perpendiculaires. Chaînés dans l'angle N.-O., ils délimitent un espace quadrangulaire, légèrement désaxé par rapport aux autres constructions du corps de bâtiment occidental (F9) et ouvert vers le sud. La fonction de cet aménagement est difficile à déterminer, en l'absence de niveaux d'occupation conservés.

Corps de bâtiment nord (II)

Les restes du corps de bâtiment septentrional se composent d'un mur de façade (F2) flanqué d'un escalier hors œuvre, du mur (F4) formant la façade arrière de l'édifice et d'une vaste cave² (F14). L'em-

prise minimale du bâtiment peut donc être estimée à 102 m².

La vaste cave (F14), située à l'extrémité orientale du corps de logis septentrional, occupe environ la moitié de sa surface. Ce sous-sol se compose d'une pièce rectangulaire (9m x 5,50m) contre laquelle sont greffés, au nord, un appendice carré (2m x 2m) et, dans l'angle S.-E., un escalier (F11). La profondeur conservée est de 2,60m. Lors de la destruction, l'ensemble a fait l'objet d'une récupération massive, mais incomplète, épargnant les murs et les voûtes de la partie orientale. Le sol, conservé de façon très lacunaire et stérile, ne subsiste que sous la forme de lambeaux en plâtre damé, installés directement sur les graviers. Ce sol n'a livré aucun matériel.

L'accès à la cave se fait par un escalier droit à une volée (F11), large de 2m. Celui-ci est voûté en berceau incliné en plein cintre, sauf à l'intersection avec le berceau longitudinal de la cave, où la voûte forme une arête. Dix marches ont été récupérées presque en totalité et seuls restent les radiers de plâtre des deux marches supérieures. L'escalier débouche dans le corps de bâtiment oriental de la demeure.

La cave est divisée en deux parties distinctes: une grande salle rectangulaire ("nef") au nord (8,20m x 2,50m) et quatre petits espaces ("bas-côtés") au sud (2m x 1,30m). La subdivision de l'espace est matérialisée au sol par des piles rectangulaires (0,82m x 0,36m), conservées sur 0,50m de hauteur et placées à intervalles réguliers de 1,25m à 1,30m. Celles-ci supportent les retombées des voûtes. La "nef" est couverte d'un unique berceau longitudinal voûté en plein cintre, tandis que les "bas-côtés" sud sont vraisemblablement couverts chacun par un berceau transversal (N.-S.).

La cave et son annexe septentrionale ne possèdent pas de fondations. Les murs, larges de 0,40m, sont installés à même le sol naturel, constitué de lits de sables et graviers.

Une porte large de 0,60m donne accès à l'annexe, mesurant 2m de côté. Sa construction est particulièrement soignée: les murs sont élevés en grandes pierres calcaires assisées, liées au plâtre et localement au limon. Le sol, contrairement à celui de la pièce principale de la cave, est en plâtre lissé.

Les murs de la cave sont en moyen appareil. Les pierres de taille calcaires qui forment leur parement sont parfois brettelées en oblique. Elles sont dis-

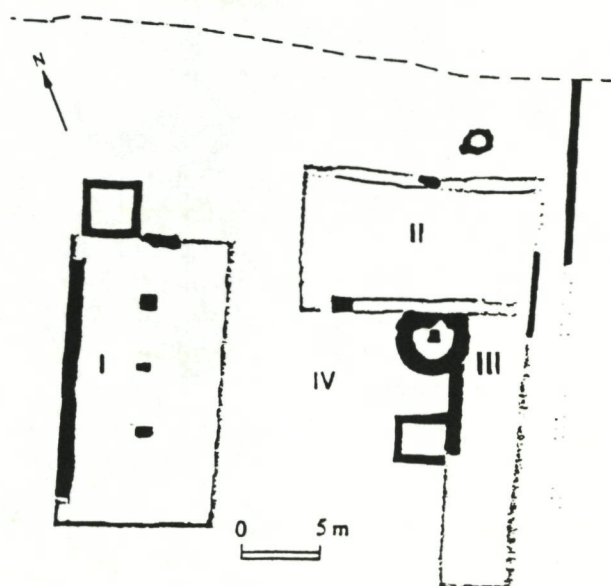


Fig. 2. - Plan masse restitué. Dessin: Fouilles des Jardins du Carrousel.

posées en assises régulières de hauteur variable (de 0,25m à 0,30m). Les joints, beurrés au plâtre, exceptionnellement au mortier de chaux, ne dépassent pas 2cm d'épaisseur. La même qualité de construction caractérise la voûte, avec néanmoins quelques particularités. D'une part, la hauteur des assises est plus petite au sommet de la voûte qu'à la base; d'autre part, la qualité du joint varie en fonction du liant utilisé. Ceux de plâtre sont plutôt dégueulants, ceux de mortier sont beurrés.

La majorité des moellons des voûtes portent des marques incisées ou tracées en gris (crayon ou mine de plomb). Elles sont situées sur l'intrados de la voûte de la pièce centrale, sur le berceau du couloir et sur le berceau rampant de l'escalier. Deux groupes peuvent être distingués: les signes affectant un seul moellon et ceux débordant sur plusieurs assises, donc postérieurs à la mise en place des claveaux. Les marques répertoriées sont des séries de un à quatre traits parallèles, des cercles, des losanges ou des "alpha". Aucune organisation rigoureuse n'a été mise en évidence.

Un escalier à vis hors œuvre, accolé dans l'angle des murs F2 et F25, atteste l'existence d'au moins un étage. Son plan est circulaire, sauf au nord où la fondation est tronquée pour s'aligner sur le mur F4. La vis est fondée sur un noyau central, constitué d'un dé calcaire de 0,70m de côté.

Le corps de bâtiment oriental (III)

L'existence d'un corps de bâtiment oriental est assurée, malgré sa destruction presque totale. Il forme une aile assez étroite (5m), longue d'au moins

² Par commodité, le terme de cave, plus neutre et utilisé dans son acception moderne de pièce souterraine, est préféré aux termes de "celliers" ou de "salle-basse", dont l'usage dans les sources écrites et la fonction connaissent une évolution dépassant l'objet de cette publication.

14,60m, fermant la cour vers l'est. Il est limité à l'ouest par un mur de façade (F25), appuyé contre l'escalier hors œuvre. L'escalier de la cave débouche dans cette aile, qui renferme aussi une fosse d'aisances (F22) à son extrémité méridionale. Elle a été retrouvée dans un état de conservation remarquable, avec sa voûte presque complète et le conduit d'écoulement qui la traverse encore en place. C'est une construction carrée de 2,55m de côté et de 3,35m de profondeur sous voûte, élevée en moellons calcaires de petites dimensions, disposés en assises irrégulières. Le liant est indifféremment du plâtre ou du limon. L'ensemble, murs et voûte, est construit de manière identique et revêtu d'un enduit de plâtre lissé. Le conduit d'écoulement (0,46m x 0,50m), construit en petits moellons de plâtre, se trouve dans l'angle N.-E. de la voûte. Il est enduit de plâtre lissé.

Un premier dépôt organique au fond de la structure résulte de son utilisation, datée par la céramique du milieu du XIV^es. Après son remblaiement lors de la destruction du manoir, cette fosse d'aisances fut réutilisée aux XV^e et XVI^es.

Les installations de service

Des structures de service rejetées de part et d'autre des corps de bâtiment complètent le plan de cette résidence péri-urbaine. Elles comprennent un puits, creusé au nord du logis septentrional et un puisard, construit dans la cour, contre le mur F25 du corps de bâtiment oriental.

Le puits (F23) est isolé. Son diamètre maximum externe est de 1,70m, son ouverture interne de 1m. Sa profondeur est d'environ 6m. Le parement est construit en moellons calcaires ébauchés, de dimensions moyennes, disposés sans agencement particulier et liés au plâtre, du moins dans sa partie supérieure. La couche de fond n'a révélé que peu de mobilier, quelques os, des tuiles et de la céramique.

Accolé au mur de façade de l'aile orientale (F25), dans la cour, se trouve un puisard (F15) de 3,15m sur 3m et de 2,30m de profondeur, sous voûte. Cette structure n'a pu être fouillée complètement, car elle a été retrouvée comblée de béton. Les observations se sont limitées à la face externe du mur ouest et au dégagement du fond. Seuls quelques restes du canal d'écoulement en pierres ont été observés sur le fond. La faible quantité de mobilier et la petite taille des objets, trouvés dans la couche d'utilisation, montrent qu'il s'agit bien d'un puisard, daté par la céramique du milieu du XIV^es. Quelques graines sauvages, mais aussi d'orge et de seigle reflètent sans doute d'avantage le milieu rural environnant que la consommation de ses habitants (de Moulins 1991, 149 et 151).

Quelques éléments d'une construction en bois ont été observés immédiatement au nord du logis. La relation chronologique entre les deux ensembles n'est pas certaine. Seule la tranchée de fondation du puits maçonné (F23) recoupe les vestiges en bois, mais rien n'assure que ce puits ait été creusé en même temps que la demeure. Ils ont fort bien pu fonctionner conjointement.

Cette combinaison suggère une construction sur sablières basses (en bois) ou sur solins dans lesquels des poteaux en bois verticaux sont maintenus. L'identification de la structure est impossible en raison du caractère très partiel du plan.

3 Les limites parcellaires

La demeure est limitée à l'est par un mur d'orientation N.-S. (F5), conservé uniquement au nord de la zone fouillée. Plus étroit (0,60m) que les fondations de la demeure, il ne correspond guère à un mur porteur. Une interprétation comme mur parcellaire est vraisemblable, même s'il n'a pas été découvert dans la partie sud de l'aire fouillée.

A environ 86m à l'ouest de la limite parcellaire F5, un second mur (F25), mal conservé, a été repéré sous la forme de deux tronçons d'environ 0,60m de large. Sa nature, sa situation sous la levée de terre des défenses avancées, ainsi que les quelques tessons du XIV^es. découverts dans les fondations, permettent vraisemblablement de le rattacher aux rares éléments constitutifs du paysage de cette époque. Il peut matérialiser la limite occidentale de la demeure.

4 La destruction du manoir

La démolition de la demeure est radicale. Les bâtiments sont dérasés et les matériaux réutilisables sont systématiquement récupérés. Ceci explique le petit nombre de moellons, de pierres de taille et d'éléments de couverture retrouvés. Le plâtre, non récupérable, domine en revanche largement parmi les gravats de démolition. C'est à cette occasion que la cave fut comblée avec du sable, du limon et de nombreux fragments de peintures murales. Une monnaie de JeanII le Bon émise entre 1355 et 1357, trouvée dans le comblement de la cave, fournit un *terminus post quem* pour cette démolition.

C'est manifestement la construction de l'enceinte urbaine, dans la seconde moitié du XIV^es., qui a nécessité la destruction du manoir, situé sur le tracé du nouvel ouvrage. Ses restes sont recouverts en grande partie par le rempart de terre et le chemin qui le longe. Seule son extrémité orientale est épargnée

par l'emprise de la fortification. Ce dernier emplacement est à nouveau bâti à partir du XVI^e s.

5 Les peintures murales

Contexte

La découverte majeure dans le manoir est certainement l'important ensemble de fragments de peintures murales trouvé principalement dans la cave (F14) du corps de bâtiment septentrional (II). Après la récupération des matériaux, celle-ci est comblée par environ 180 m³ de remblais. Rejetés pêle-mêle et mélangés à d'autres débris de construction, les enduits peints constituent une part importante du comblement (environ 50 m³). Aucun ordre n'apparaît dans la disposition des fragments et des éléments appartenant à des décors différents sont mêlés les uns aux autres.

L'abondance des fragments permet un remontage, au moins partiel des décors et apporte des renseignements sur l'architecture des bâtiments grâce aux diverses formes des plaques d'enduit (angles, voussains, etc.).

La présentation de cet ensemble exceptionnel reste provisoire, car il est actuellement toujours en cours de remontage et d'étude. La variété des motifs permet d'affirmer que les fragments appartiennent aux décors de plusieurs salles, mais sans pouvoir préciser de quelle partie de la demeure ils proviennent. La richesse du décor, la variété du répertoire figuré, les éléments de scènes historiées, le soin dans le rendu des motifs en font un ensemble de qualité certaine.

Technique picturale

Les décors sont peints sur plâtre mêlé de sable et de petits fragments de charbons de bois. Une charge de petits moellons calcaires ou de fragments de tuiles est ajoutée, principalement pour l'ébauche des éléments architectoniques en relief. Des plaques ou des tiges en fer sont noyées dans le support, particulièrement dans des éléments d'angle. A première analyse, il ne s'agit pas d'éléments raidisseurs, mais plutôt de raccords entre deux blocs. Dans plusieurs cas, des morceaux d'enduits peints sont mêlés au support, indiquant par là le réemploi partiel d'un revêtement antérieur détruit.

La technique picturale est difficile à déterminer, en l'état actuel des analyses. Certains pigments semblent pris dans la masse, mais une technique *a fresco* paraît peu vraisemblable. Les analyses préliminaires³ ont certes révélé la présence de chaux, mais à un taux

si bas qu'elle peut provenir du calcaire contenu dans le support et non de la carbonatation des pigments dans l'enduit.

A ces données s'ajoutent les observations faites lors du nettoyage des fragments. Aucun support spécifique pour la peinture n'a été remarqué. De manière générale, on ne distingue pas les couches successives de plâtre. Par endroits, une couche d'enduit de 5 mm d'épaisseur environ, portant la peinture, peut être observée sur une surface déjà lissée. Cette particularité résulte vraisemblablement des propriétés techniques du plâtre, qui provoque un amalgame des différentes couches d'enduit.

Plusieurs hypothèses peuvent être émises pour expliquer la peinture: écrasement de la surface ou ajout d'un lait, par exemple. La première possibilité consiste à écraser la surface encore humide de façon à dégager une surface lisse pour que les pigments puissent adhérer. Selon la seconde hypothèse, l'ajout d'un lait, contenant souvent de la chaux, permet de réhumidifier une surface trop sèche et favorise ainsi l'adhérence de la peinture au support. Ces techniques peuvent être utilisées conjointement sur une même paroi, peut-être en fonction de la difficulté d'exécution du décor ou de l'accessibilité de la paroi à peindre.

La gamme des couleurs utilisées comprend du gris, du noir, du blanc, des ocres jaunes, orangés et rouges, des bruns, du bleu et un vert kaki. Qualité et conservation ne sont pas égales. Certaines couleurs sont fragiles, surtout le beige et le bleu. D'autres (le bleu et celle des fleurs de lys) sont presque totalement effacées, sans que le phénomène soit pour autant généralisé. Ce mauvais état de conservation est dû à une usure naturelle des peintures sur les murs, mais aussi aux conditions d'enfouissement.

L'observation détaillée des fragments polychromes lors du nettoyage et quelques remontages ont permis de les classer (au moins dans un premier temps) en une dizaine de types.

Visages

Dans l'état actuel du remontage, deux visages humains seulement ont été identifiés. Traités de manière très différente, ils restent toujours isolés et ne peuvent être rattachés à aucun décor. Le premier fragment montre un personnage barbu, vu de face et

³ Analyses effectuées en 1990 par l'Institut français de restauration des œuvres d'art (IFROA, M. J. Philippon) et le Laboratoire de recherches des musées de France (LRMF, M. J.-P. Rioux) et en 1991 par le Centre régional d'étude et de traitement des œuvres d'art (CRETOA).

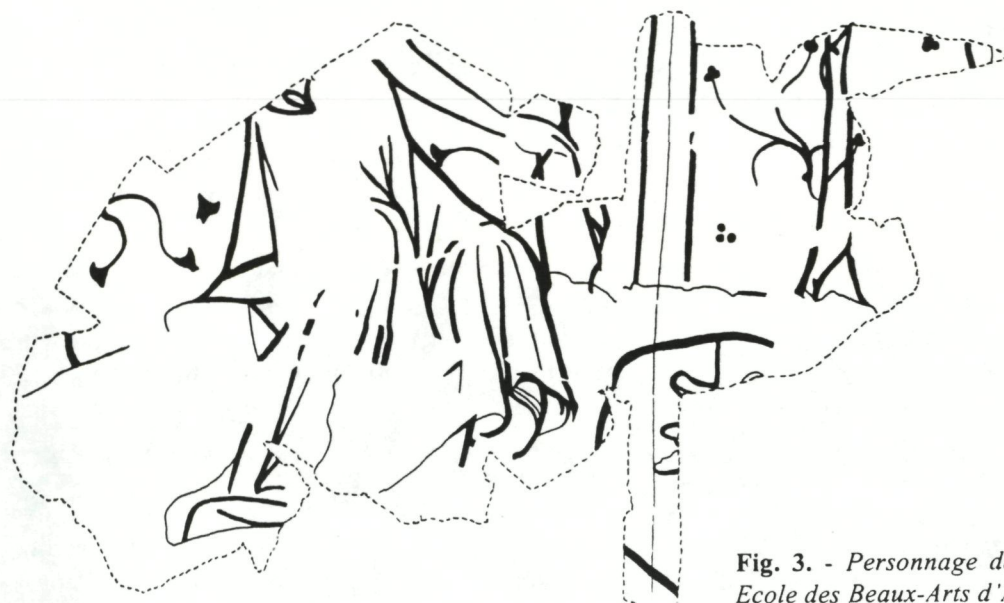


Fig. 3. - Personnage dans la végétation. Dessin: Ecole des Beaux-Arts d'Avignon.

dessiné en brun sur un fond ocre. Un trait rouge souligne la lèvre supérieure de la bouche. Le second personnage, vu de profil à gauche, apparaît en blanc, cerné de larges traits noirs sur un fond rouge. Une main est visible, mais sa position demeure incertaine.

Personnage dans la végétation (fig. 3)

Le remontage, encore très partiel, permet pourtant de comprendre ce décor. Il représente un personnage féminin, habillé d'une robe rouge sur un fond de végétation. La figure semble assise, le bras droit tendu vers un tronc d'arbre. La manche est peinte en gris, les plis et godets de la robe en noir. Un des godets suit un tracé préparatoire incisé. Aux pieds du personnage, vers la droite de l'ensemble reconstitué, une masse circulaire est représentée en blanc, cernée de noir, avec un motif indéterminé de couleur jaune au milieu. La végétation apparaît sur un fond ocre jaune. Celle-ci comprend des troncs et des branches d'arbres, en gris-blanc, cernés de noir, entre lesquels s'enroulent des petites tiges rouges. Celles-ci s'achèvent soit par une fleur à corolle campaniforme, soit par une fleurette à trois pétales. Une moulure à chanfrein double, dont la fonction paraît plus décorative qu'architecturale, traverse verticalement le décor et le partage en deux secteurs. A sa gauche, se trouvent les fleurs à corolle campaniforme et à droite, celles à trois pétales.

Chevaux

Une tête de cheval, vue de profil, est représentée sur un fond de quadrillage, peut-être un treillage. Longue de 12cm et large à l'encolure de 8cm, elle est dessinée en jaune et brun avec des rehauts de blanc dans la crinière et dans l'œil. Le treillage apparaît sur fond gris kaki; la couleur est difficile à déterminer dans la

mesure où il peut s'agir d'une altération des pigments. Les brins entrelacés du treillis (alternance de traits noir-jaune-rouge-noir) délimitent des rectangles, larges de 4cm et longs de 10cm au moins. Un ensemble de onze fragments pourrait se rattacher à une autre représentation de cheval (fig. 4), peint en blanc et cerné de noir sur un fond ocre-jaune. L'interprétation de ce dessin est encore incertaine. Si cheval il y a, il serait plus grand que nature (largeur de l'encolure= 48cm, hauteur totale= 86cm, longueur de la tête= 80cm). Le fond est parsemé de boules blanches, auxquelles un croissant rouge donne du relief. Ce motif présent sur de nombreux fragments.

Arcature à pinacle

Ce fragment présente une arcature et un pinacle gothiques à bourgeons, dessinés d'un trait sûr, en noir, gris et brun sur un fond ocre jaune.

Inscription peinte

Un fragment, isolé à ce jour, porte trois lettres d'une inscription, peinte en noir sur fond jaune. Celle-ci semble contemporaine de la peinture et non postérieure comme le sont les nombreux graffiti retrouvés.

Végétation, arbres

D'autres enduits représentent une végétation sur fond ocre jaune. Certains fragments ont pu être associés à un autre décor grâce au remontage. Des angles présentent sur une face les motifs de végétation et sur l'autre le décor géométrique "tapis de quadrilobes bordé d'une bande florale". La position et l'orientation des motifs évoquent l'ornementation d'un manteau de cheminée. Mais rien ne permet de dire quel décor occupe la place privilégiée au-dessus du foyer. Le feuillage des arbres est rendu de manière très

stylisée par une masse circulaire noire, dont le pourtour est parfois festonné pour évoquer des feuilles.

Etoiles bleues

Ce décor est constitué d'un semis d'étoiles bleues à cœur rouge, sur un fond ocre-jaune. Les étoiles, à six branches, sont tracées de manière très nette; elles ont sans doute été peintes au pochoir. Un remontage partiel a montré une distance d'environ 18cm entre deux étoiles.

Losanges et motifs héraldiques⁴

D'assez nombreux fragments appartiennent manifestement à un même ensemble. Le schéma décoratif de base, répété selon un mode qui n'a pas encore pu être établi, oppose par la pointe deux losanges, reliés par un disque rouge au centre surchargé en blanc. Les losanges, fermement enlevés sur un fond blanc par un trait noir, sont alternativement occupés par deux blasons. Le premier a d'abord été peint d'une sous-couche grise, puis recouvert d'un bleu franc mais très inégalement conservé; le champ est semé de fleurs de lys héraldiques, dont seule la silhouette se distingue, la couleur d'origine ayant disparu. Il s'agit des armes de France. Le second blason comporte une bordure rouge orangé, encadrant des bandes alternativement jaunes, couleur toujours bien conservée, et blanches ou bleues; un examen attentif montre que le blanc (le plâtre en réalité) n'apparaît que là où le bleu d'origine est tombé. Compte tenu des pigments disponibles au moment de la réalisation et de leur altération aujourd'hui, ce blason semble donc pouvoir se lire "bandé d'or et d'azur de six pièces, à bordure de gueules", ce qui correspond à l'écu dit de "Bourgogne ancien", porté par cette maison ducale au XIV^e. Dans les espaces laissés vides entre les losanges, on a rapidement tracé en rouge un motif floral très stylisé, formé de deux pétales évasés; certaines tiges sont rehaussées de feuilles beige très clair, négatif vraisemblable d'une couleur disparue, dont le contour polylobé évoque celui des feuilles de chêne.

Certains losanges armoriés viennent buter contre une bordure également à motifs héraldiques. Des traits noirs délimitent des demi-losanges, encadrés de triangles plus petits. Ces derniers font apparaître, en noir sur fond blanc, des "mouchetures d'hermines". Elles pourraient évoquer le blason "d'hermine plain" adopté par le duc de Bretagne en 1316 (Pastoureau



Fig. 4. - Encolure de cheval. Dessin: Ecole des Beaux-Arts d'Avignon. Echelle 1/10^{ème}.

1979, 184). Les demi-losanges sont timbrés d'une fleur de lys sur fond gris bleu, mais ici l'écu est brisé par une petite bande composée rouge, blanc, rouge. Sous une forme condensée, car habituellement l'écu est "semé de fleurs de lys sans nombre", il semble s'agir des armes du comte d'Evreux, "de France au bâton composé de gueules et d'argent, brochant sur le tout".

Plusieurs des fragments portant ce décor présentent une surface légèrement incurvée; ils pourraient être des éléments de plafond ou, plus précisément, d'entrevous de plâtre peint, entre deux solives. La présence de ruptures parfaitement rectilignes dans le support et dans le décor, de sortes d'encoches pouvant correspondre à une poutraison, confortent cette hypothèse.

Un même système de couvrement, combinant solives laissées apparentes et petits berceaux longitudinaux de plâtre, est visible à la tour Ferrande de Pernes-les-Fontaines (Vaucluse), sur deux étages superposés. Tous ces décors sont datés de la dernière décennie du XIII^e (Deschamps & Thibout 1963, 233; Didier 1990).

Réseau de quadrilobes et trompe-l'œil

La paroi est recouverte d'un fond jaune rempli de petits rinceaux bruns, sur lequel un entrelacs noir dessine des quadrilobes. Les intersections sont soulignées d'un nœud noir, au cœur rouge. Les brins de l'entrelacs sont figurés par un filet noir, doublé de traits plus fins, alternativement brun d'un côté et gris de l'autre. Au centre des quadrilobes s'inscrit un motif floral, assez élaboré, sur fond blanc. D'un cœur

⁴ L'identification des blasons a été réalisée par Madame Léonelli (Conservateur des antiquités et objets d'art du Vaucluse) et confirmée par Monsieur Popoff (Conservateur en chef, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des monnaies, médailles et antiques).

brun rouge en forme de marguerite, sortent de petites tiges à fleurs dont le calice rose orangé est entouré de pétales bleus. Des feuilles simples, dessinées en beige, remplissent le motif. Au-dessus du réseau de quadrilobes règne une frise kaki et noire, constituée en alternance de demi-cercles noirs sur un fond vert kaki ou inversement. Le haut de la paroi est orné d'un décor complexe, en trompe-l'œil, figurant des petites arcatures à caissons (en noir sur un fond orangé) sur des modillons vus en perspective. Le dessin est préparé par un tracé incisé, au moins pour les modillons et les fonds des arcades. La gamme de couleurs comprend des gris de tonalités différentes. Cette ornementation a été observée sur différentes parties architecturales (cloisons, ébrasements, arcs ou angles) de la demeure.

Ces trompe-l'œil architecturaux utilisés comme bordures, pour séparer des registres ou pour souligner l'ouverture d'un arc, s'observent dans l'enluminure parisienne du deuxième quart du XIV^es. (Léonelli 1994, 41) avec la même opposition de couleur qu'au manoir du Carrousel, orange noir, pour ombrer le caissonnage des arcatures. Les frises architectoniques ne sont pas employées seules: dans une des salles de la livrée Ceccano, elles surmontent, comme dans le manoir parisien, un tapis de quadrilobes sur fond jaune clair.

Quadrilobes bordé d'une bande florale

Ce décor est peint sur un fond rouge, décoré de petites fleurs noires à feuilles bleues. Il est constitué d'un tapis de quadrilobes noirs, cernés de filets jaunes et noirs, réunis par des nœuds blancs. Il est limité par une bordure horizontale de fleurs à pétales bleus et à calice orangé, dessinées sur un fond noir. Le bleu, pigment fragile, a disparu sur la plupart d'entre elles. Les remontages effectués à ce jour permettent de penser que ce décor occupe un emplacement particulier. Les nombreux angles constituent une arête forcément de biais, ceci en raison de la lecture du motif. Cette ornementation pourrait décorer un manteau de cheminée. Ce même principe de décoration existe au château de Farcheville (Essonnes), vers 1304, où une frise décorative avec scènes historiées fait le tour de la pièce (DiMattéo & Lablaude 1989, 75-80).

Carrés orange et kaki

Ce motif montre une alternance de carrés orange et kaki, imitant peut-être des cubes en perspective.

Graffiti

Une vingtaine de graffiti ont été repérés à ce jour. Ils représentent un poisson, un double cercle incisé, des cercles sécants, trois inscriptions non déchiffrées, une fleur de lys dans un écu, un dé, etc.

Les fragments de peinture découverts ne recouvraient pas seulement les murs et les plafonds, mais aussi les éléments architecturaux constituant l'ossature de la demeure. Des ébrasements en plein cintre appartiennent à des portes à des fenêtres, ou placards. L'un d'eux, d'une ouverture de 0,75m, est accolé à une poutre large de 0,40m environ, formant un linteau. Ce dernier est peint en gris et recouvert par un quadrilobe du même type que celui associé au décor en trompe-l'œil. Ce même décor de quadrilobes recouvre un fragment d'un large ébrasement de porte ou de fenêtre. Un chapiteau pyramidal engagé, dont seul subsiste le tailloir, est peint uniformément en rouge.

D'autres éléments participent vraisemblablement à l'architecture intérieure des salles ou au compartimentage du décor peint. Ce sont principalement des moulures ou colonnettes polygonales, peintes partiellement en rouge qui constituent peut-être des éléments de fenêtres géminées.

6 Le manoir, son architecture et sa place dans le paysage péri-urbain de Paris au XIV^es

La connaissance de cette demeure est certes lacunaire. Les carences de la documentation archéologique laissent de nombreuses questions ouvertes. Des données élémentaires, comme les dimensions complètes des bâtiments, manquent totalement. Pourtant, il est possible de se faire une certaine idée de leur élévation à partir de leur plan et de leur disposition, des matériaux utilisés et des quelques fragments d'architecture retrouvés. L'étude des peintures murales apporte des compléments significatifs.

Les trois corps de bâtiments entourent une cour qui s'ouvre vers la Seine. Ils occupent une position éminente, dont leur disposition tire pleinement parti. Le logis s'ouvre en fond de cour; il est bordé de part et d'autre par deux ailes à l'architecture très différente. L'ensemble s'étend sur un espace d'au moins 1000 m², dont 350 m² environ sont bâtis.

Le bâtiment occidental occupe manifestement une place privilégiée dans le manoir, quelle que soit sa restitution. Les bases de piliers centraux suggèrent deux possibilités de couvertures: soit une voûte en pierre, soit une charpente en bois. La première ne permet pas de préciser quel type de voûtement était utilisé: berceaux longitudinaux ou transversaux, voûtes d'arêtes ou d'ogives. Plusieurs hypothèses sont envisageables. Celle d'une voûte d'arêtes ou d'ogives à quatre quartiers de 3,50m de côté correspondrait peut-être mieux à la relative légèreté de la structure de la construction. Un chapiteau d'angle engagé en plâtre, peint en rouge, découvert dans le

remblai de la cave du bâtiment II, trouverait ici sa place, pour autant qu'il provienne du bâtiment I. La charpente, seconde possibilité, est envisageable selon des techniques différentes.

Le bâtiment possède-t-il un étage? La question reste sans réponse.

Le corps de logis est installé au-dessus d'une cave, totalement enterrée et occupant la moitié environ de l'emprise de l'édifice. La qualité de ce sous-sol, voûté de berceaux longitudinaux et transversaux, suggère un bâtiment de belle allure. La façade tournée vers la Seine est flanquée d'un escalier à vis hors œuvre formant tourelle. L'existence d'au moins un étage est ainsi formellement assurée. La solidité des fondations en permet davantage. L'existence d'un étage implique également celle d'un comble sous charpente. La belle largeur du logis peut être soulignée. Avec ses 8,50m, elle se situe dans la moyenne supérieure des manoirs normands et bretons du bas Moyen Âge (Mignot & Chatenet [dir.] 1993, 72; Benoit-Cattin 1990, 3). Davantage peut-être que la longueur, la largeur a des implications financières, car elle conditionne la taille des poutres et nécessite des arbres plus gros, donc plus chers car plus rares.

Enfin, le bâtiment oriental forme une aile plus étroite, mais ses fondations sont aussi solides que celles du logis auquel il est rattaché. L'escalier d'angle permet d'envisager un étage sur cette aile.

Les matériaux utilisés dans la construction et les peintures murales offrent un complément précieux pour l'analyse architecturale.

Les murs extérieurs sont manifestement élevés en pierres de taille. Un moellon en calcaire massif, retrouvé dans la cave du logis, est recouvert sur une de ses faces par un enduit peint peu épais (2 à 5 cm), appartenant à l'ensemble des tapis de quadrilobes couvrant les parois. Cet exemple demeure unique, en raison de la récupération systématique des moellons calcaires lors de la destruction. Il montre pourtant de façon claire qu'une partie au moins des murs sont élevés en matériaux de qualité.

Le plâtre occupe une place particulière dans la construction du manoir. Il est utilisé comme liant, dans la réalisation des enduits muraux et même pour la fabrication de petits moellons taillés directement dans la masse. Des éléments architecturaux, parfois de grandes dimensions comme des arcs ou des chapiteaux engagés, sont entièrement réalisés dans ce matériau, chargé alors de débris divers pour assurer une meilleure solidité. L'abondante utilisation du plâtre s'explique par la présence de nombreuses carrières de gypse près de Paris et par la facilité de sa mise en œuvre (Roux 1973, 176; Pomerol & Feugueur 1986, 24 et 37).

Une architecture sur armature de bois, parfaitement envisageable à cette époque, n'est pas confirmée par l'étude des revers des fragments d'enduits. Les nombreuses empreintes interprétées dans un premier temps comme des négatifs de bois sont en réalité des marques de raclage entre deux couches de plâtre. Seules les empreintes relevées sur les fragments appartenant à l'ensemble des losanges armoriés sont liées à une armature de bois d'un plafond. Des vides de section quadrangulaire sont présents sur le revers du décor comme dans la bordure. A ce jour, aucun fragment ne peut être attribué à une voûte.

La majeure partie des enduits peints appartient à des cloisons intérieures. Les deux faces opposées des fragments sont planes et lisses, parfois peintes sur les deux côtés. Aucune trace au sol ne subsiste de ces cloisons, en raison de l'absence évidente de fondation. Seules les peintures permettent donc de savoir que le logis (au minimum 100m² au sol) est subdivisé en pièces distinctes. Ses parois sont rythmées par des moulures ou colonnettes polygonales, ainsi que par de nombreuses ouvertures, dont les fragments d'enduit peint offrent le témoignage.

Les parois intérieures sont revêtues d'un décor peint recouvrant aussi divers aménagements (placard, cheminées, ébrasements de fenêtres, portes, niches...), fréquents dans les demeures de cette époque (Mignot & Chatenet [dir.] 1993, 70-84). Quelques indices laissent penser que la peinture ne se limite pas aux pièces. En effet, certains ébrasements sont peints sur trois faces, voire davantage pour les éléments plus complexes. Si l'on pouvait démontrer qu'ils appartiennent à des fenêtres, cela prouverait que la polychromie s'étendait aussi en façade.

A quel type de demeure correspondent ces restes? L'ampleur du plan d'ensemble, la superficie des corps de logis, la présence d'un escalier à vis et ses dimensions, le choix des matériaux de construction et la facture soignée de la cave, auxquels s'ajoute le répertoire élaboré du décor peint en font une résidence de qualité, très vraisemblablement patricienne. Les godets en grès du Beauvaisis, la tasse polychrome de style "très décoré", ainsi que les fragments de vitrail et de verre coloré à l'étain, suggèrent aussi un milieu de qualité, bien que de tels indices doivent être utilisés avec prudence. Sa situation périphérique, en dehors de la "commune clôturée" édifiée par Philippe Auguste, identifie sans conteste la demeure des jardins du Carrousel à une de ces maisons des champs (Viollet le Duc 1864, 300) bâties aux abords immédiats de la ville ou plus exactement, dans ce cas, à l'ombre du château royal du Louvre, distant de 300 m. Comme pour bien d'autres manoirs, la proximité immédiate de la rivière a exercé un rôle dans le choix du site.

Le décor peint se démarque des peintures contemporaines, sans présenter toutefois une qualité exceptionnelle. Dans l'état actuel des remontages, les grandes scènes historiées sont peu nombreuses, limitées peut-être au manteau d'une cheminée. Encore faut-il tenir compte de la probable disparition de certaines surfaces peintes. Il est frappant de voir la mollesse du tracé de certains quadrilobes, leur absence de similitude et le caractère approximatif de leur juxtaposition et de leur jonction. Ailleurs, aussi bien dans le domaine royal, sur les parois de la chapelle de Farcheville (Di Mattéo & Lablaude 1989, 76) que dans le midi où les décors de ce type sont conservés en plus grand nombre, à Avignon ou à Montpellier, la régularité et la géométrisation des schémas de construction des décors couvrants s'imposent au premier regard et facilitent les reconstitutions (Sournia & Vayssettes 1991, 169). Cependant, les peintures du manoir des jardins du Carrousel se signalent par la vivacité de certains coloris (le bleu des pétales de fleurs, l'orange et le brique), la rareté de certains tons (le vert kaki). Mais si en d'autres lieux la gamme est aujourd'hui plus éteinte, moins contrastée, peut-être est-ce seulement dû à des conditions de conservation différentes. On peut remarquer la prépondérance, en nombre de fragments d'enduit peint, des fonds ocre jaune clair, aussi bien pour les décors figurés (personnages, chevaux, végétation) que pour plusieurs motifs décoratifs. Sur l'ensemble du territoire français, cette couleur de fond est très usitée au XIV^es., mais la plupart du temps elle ne porte que des faux-appareils. Ces derniers constituent, pour les édifices civils aussi bien que religieux, et partout, le type de revêtement le plus fréquent: leur absence totale dans le manoir parisien n'en est que plus notable.

Les éléments de plafond peint à motifs héraldiques renvoient directement à un exemple comparable, mais un peu plus récent (seconde moitié du XIV^es.) et avec des étoiles au lieu des hermines, découvert dans la salle d'apparat de la cour des Archidiacres à Metz (Brunella *et al.* 1988, 55-56). Entre tous, l'élément le plus remarquable est celui de la frise de petites arcatures supportées par des modillons vus de biais.

Peut-on dater plus précisément le manoir? Sa destruction ne soulève guère de problèmes. Elle est avec certitude postérieure à 1355-1357, comme l'indique la monnaie de Jean II découverte dans le remblai comblant la cave; elle est aussi antérieure au rempart de terre des fortifications, édifié à partir de 1366. En revanche, l'origine et l'évolution éventuelle du manoir sont plus malaisées à retracer. Le seul contexte de construction conservé (la tranchée de fondation F7) permet de dater le bâtiment I de la première moitié du XIV^es., sans autre précision. Mais cette

datation ne peut être généralisée à l'ensemble des bâtiments. Toute la difficulté est de savoir si le manoir forme un ensemble homogène ou s'il est le résultat de transformations successives. Plusieurs éléments tendent à privilégier cette dernière hypothèse: le puits F23 est postérieur au bâti de bois, le mur F9 coupe des fosses en pleine terre F16, le mur occidental F25 du corps de bâtiment III vient se greffer sur l'escalier à vis F1, des cloisons ou des murets sont construits avec des résidus de parois peintes noyées dans la masse. De son côté, le rendu différent des deux visages peints suggère peut-être aussi une différence chronologique, sinon artistique. Autant l'un se rattache encore à la peinture de la fin du XIII^es., de même que l'arcature à pinacle et bourgeons; autant l'autre, caractérisé par une vue de profil et un tracé souligné à grands traits, se rapproche de l'art du milieu du XIV^es. On le constate, les indices d'une évolution architecturale sont nombreux. L'ampleur des transformations et leur chronologie restent toutefois inconnues.

Le mobilier n'apporte guère de précisions supplémentaires. A l'exception du lot provenant de la fondation F7, tous les ensembles de céramique sont homogènes, quel que soit le contexte (occupation ou destruction) et sont datés globalement du milieu du XIV^es. Manifestement, les témoins matériels ne couvrent pas toute la durée d'occupation du manoir et illustrent surtout sa dernière phase d'occupation.

Les peintures offrent des perspectives plus intéressantes. D'une manière générale, elles trouvent leurs meilleurs parallèles dans des constructions réparties dans le temps entre la fin du XIII^es. et le milieu du XIV^es., mais ne permettent pas de resserrer davantage la fourchette chronologique. Tous les motifs décoratifs employés ont une longue durée d'utilisation, de même que les schémas de construction qui les relient entre eux. Les motifs historiés se révèlent trop fragmentaires ou trop usés pour fonder une analyse stylistique. Les motifs héraldiques peints constituent en revanche un des indices les plus sûrs pour dater les peintures, voire pour identifier le cercle auquel se rattache son commanditaire.

L'étude des sources historiques permet de situer cet ensemble dans la topographie parisienne. Au XIV^es., ce secteur périphérique de la ville se partage entre la "Couture l'Evêque", vaste domaine agricole de 42 arpents 3 quartiers, l'hôpital et le jardin des Quinze-Vingts, le manoir et le clos de la Petite Bretagne, un autre manoir, des pièces de terres mal définies et un artisanat de tuiles.

L'hospice des Quinze-Vingts, fondé vers 1254 par Saint Louis, est bien localisé. Il occupe un terrain le long du chemin de Roule – actuelle rue Saint-Honoré

–, à hauteur de l'actuelle place du théâtre Français. Le clos de la Petite Bretagne, vaste domaine attesté depuis le XII^e s., se situe entre le chemin de berge de la Seine et l'hôpital des Quinze-Vingts. Les limites occidentales de la Petite Bretagne et de l'hôpital des Quinze-Vingts forment un axe rectiligne N.-S. depuis le chemin de Roule vers la Seine⁵.

Le second manoir appartient en 1309 à un certain Ernoul de la Haute-Maison, comme l'apprend un acte d'acensement conservé dans le cartulaire de Notre-Dame de Paris (Berty 1866, t. 1, 285-286). Il est racheté avant 1316 par Pierre des Essarts (Guérard 1850, t. III, 232), personnage très connu de l'entourage royal, anobli en 1320 (Cazelles 1965 et 1972, 108-109, 219-220). Pierre des Essarts le possède certainement encore en 1342. En effet, dans un acte daté de la veille de la Trinité de cette année (archives des Quinze-Vingts, liasse 306), il fait don à la congrégation des aveugles du clos de 42 arpents qu'il avait acheté jadis à Ernoul de la Haute-Maison en même temps que son manoir. Toutefois, Pierre des Essarts prend soin de préciser qu'il ne sera pas tenu de condamner le portail qui sépare son "hostel des tuileries" dudit clos⁶. Cette clause particulière semble indiquer qu'il garde la propriété de son hôtel, peut-être jusqu'à sa mort de la peste en 1349. La destinée du manoir après 1342 est imprécise. Sans doute est-il inclus dans la difficile succession de Pierre des Essarts et est-il passé avec les autres biens de ce dernier dans le patrimoine de Robert de Lorris en 1354 (Cazelles 1972, 285-289).

Ces sources permettent de localiser ce second manoir à l'ouest du clos de la Petite Bretagne, au sud de la propriété des Quinze-Vingts et à l'est des tuileries. La limite sud n'est pas indiquée, mais il s'agit vraisemblablement du chemin de Seine. Cette locali-

sation est corroborée par un passage des Lettres Royaux de juillet 1385 (archives de Quinze-Vingts, liasse 306) qui permet de fixer le jardin potager des Quinze-Vingts entre l'hospice royal et le clos de la Petite Bretagne à l'est, le clos "qui jadis fu feu Pierre des Essarts" et les tuileries au sud, un mur de clôture allant des tuileries jusqu'au chemin de Roule à l'ouest et, enfin, ce même chemin au nord.

Les vestiges correspondent à cette situation. La confrontation des sources archéologiques et historiques fait apparaître une coïncidence entre l'emplacement d'un manoir détruit entre 1355 et 1366 et une parcelle dont on peut suivre les mutations successives entre 1309 et 1342.

Peut-on aller plus loin et préciser à quel propriétaire attribuer la construction du manoir et – plus déterminant peut-être – la réalisation des peintures murales⁷? L'archéologie ne permet pas de dater la construction du manoir et l'étude des sources historiques ne révèle pas davantage quand celui-ci a été édifié. Le remontage et l'étude des peintures ne sont pas suffisamment avancés pour apporter des réponses définitives, même si les motifs héraldiques et le trompe-l'œil architectural renvoient à l'entourage royal. Inutile, dès lors, de solliciter davantage la documentation disponible en l'état.

L'intérêt du manoir dépasse pourtant largement ces questions. La révélation d'un ensemble résidentiel péri-urbain, la qualité de son agencement et de son décor, les comparaisons multiples qu'ils autorisent, sont autant d'apports significatifs à la connaissance de l'architecture civile du bas Moyen Âge.

Il est aussi le dernier avatar de la longue histoire rurale de ce secteur du Louvre. Par ses liens avec l'enceinte urbaine, il constitue le pivot autour duquel s'articule l'évolution passée et ultérieure du site.

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⁵ Lettres Royaux de juillet 1385, archives des Quinze-Vingts, liasse 306. D'autres documents plus récents précisent d'ailleurs explicitement que le clos de la Petite Bretagne tient à l'ouest aux fortifications de la ville, élevées à l'emplacement de notre manoir (Berty 1866, 80).

⁶ L'acte de 1309 et celui de 1342 apportent aussi un beau témoignage des activités agricoles qui caractérisent un domaine manorial du bas Moyen Âge, même proche d'une ville. Résidence et terres cultivées sont étroitement liées et, dans le cas présent, c'est un portail qui matérialise ce lien. L'acte d'acensement de 1309 fait d'ailleurs obligation à Ernoul "d'améliorer la terre" de l'ancienne couture l'évêque qu'il prend en cens. En 1342, le don de Pierre des Essarts a pour effet de dissocier le manoir du domaine agricole.

⁷ Les historiens de la peinture médiévale savent que les commandes sont passées en fonction d'un calendrier et de circonstances qui ne doivent rien au hasard. Dans le cas de l'habitation civile, le décor peut être réalisé soit dans la foulée de la construction, soit à l'occasion d'un événement familial (réception, mariage, ...). Ces deux possibilités sont également envisageables pour le manoir des jardins du Carrousel: soit les peintures ont couvert les murs dès la construction de la demeure, soit est-ce pour marquer une date de la vie privée de son occupant (s'il s'agit de Pierre des Essarts, on pourrait penser à son anoblissement en 1320) que celui-ci a voulu enjoliver son cadre de vie et manifester à travers les allusions héraldiques du décor la reconnaissance qu'il éprouvait envers ses protecteurs.

Christiane Prigent

La sculpture profane comme manifestation de la culture laïque dans les édifices religieux: l'exemple de la Bretagne aux XVe et XVIe siècles

Introduction

Au cours des siècles, des voix se sont élevées dans l'Eglise pour condamner les fantaisies dans l'art sacré: en vain! En effet, les diatribes de saint Bernard¹, d'Aelred de Rievaulx et d'autres auteurs influencés par la mystique cistercienne² n'ont jamais arrêté durablement les représentations monstrueuses ou ludiques qu'elles prétendaient condamner. Ainsi les travaux portant sur les modillons des églises romanes³, sur les *marginalia* des manuscrits gothiques⁴ ont révélé l'existence de thèmes laïques bien avant l'époque que nous nous proposons d'étudier, les XVe et XVIe siècles en Bretagne⁵. Dans cette province, par rapport à ce que l'on observe dans d'autres régions pour la même période, les Flandres par exemple⁶, la proportion de sujets dits profanes est assez faible. Il faut cependant résister à la facilité d'une opposition entre profane et religieux qui paraît étrangère aux mentalités médiévales.

Ces sculptures profanes occupent des emplacements précis dans les édifices religieux. A l'extérieur on les recense principalement sur les pignons et les corniches. Tout un monde étrange se détache des murs: il peut aller d'animaux (à l'église de Pencran, les gargouilles offrent des formes variées: un lion, un monstre marin, un sanglier et un ours muselé) à un Adam impudique face à une Eve qui l'est à peine moins (chapelle des Trois-Fontaines en Gouézec), en passant par des fous coiffés de bonnets à grelots, des moines à la face réjouie et des personnages énigmatiques. A l'intérieur, les chapiteaux, les consoles et les sablières qui reçoivent la charpente le long des

murs ont été ornés d'une décoration placée à hauteur du regard. Parmi les motifs religieux se logent des scènes de la vie quotidienne – les labours au Tréhou, la chasse à courre à Grâces-Guingamp –, auxquelles se mêlent des monstres apocalyptiques, des figures humaines dans des positions insolites, des sujets triviaux qui peuvent confiner à l'indécence. C'est surtout dans les miséricordes des stalles (cathédrales de Saint-Pol-de-Léon et de Tréguier) que les artistes se sont livrés à une débauche de formes.

1 La vie quotidienne à l'assaut du sacré

La société civile prend une place grandissante dans l'art religieux des XVe et XVIe siècles. Des scènes de la vie courante sont ainsi évoquées: charmante comme cette jeune mère qui allaite son enfant, pendant qu'elle écarte, en le tirant par la queue, un petit chien envahissant, à l'église de Gueltas. L'iconographie ne témoigne pas du seul bonheur conjugal mais d'autres sortes de félicité: à l'église de La Méaugon, un homme entre deux âges semble tiraillé entre une plantureuse matrone (son épouse?) et une mince jouvencelle. L'image du couple c'est aussi la dispute qui se règle à coup de battoir, sur l'archivolte du porche de l'église Saint-Armel en Ploërmel. Le sculpteur de la miséricorde de Saint-Pol a préféré montrer l'issue du combat: un homme et une femme adossés, se tenant par la main mais s'écartant le plus loin possible, illustrerait la désunion. Les trois ordres de la société voisinent sur une sablière de la nef de l'église de Guengat: se suivent d'est en ouest le curé

¹ A. FRACHEBOUD, Saint-Bernard est-il le seul dans son attitude face aux oeuvres d'art?, *Collectanea Ordinis Cistercensium Reformatum*, 1953, 113-130.

² L. PRESSOUYRE, Saint Bernard to saint Francis: monastic ideals and iconographic programs in the cloisters, *Gesta. International center of Medieval art* XII, 1975, 71-92.

³ N. KENAN-KEDAR, Les modillons de Saintonge et du Poitou comme manifestations de la culture laïque, *Les cahiers de*

civilisation médiévale XXIX, 1986, 311-330.

⁴ L. RANDALL, *Images in the margin of gothic manuscripts*, Berkeley/Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1966.

⁵ C. PRIGENT, *Pouvoir ducal, religion et production artistique en Basse-Bretagne*, Paris, Maisonneuve et Larose, 1992.

⁶ L. MAETERLINCK, *Le genre satirique, fantastique et licencieux dans la sculpture flamande et wallonne*, Paris, Schemit, 1910.

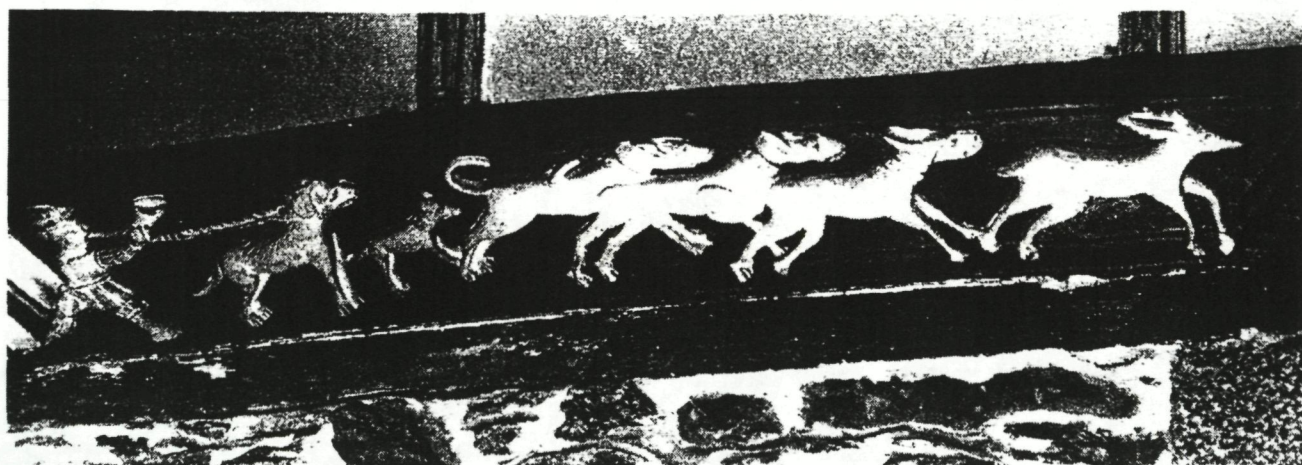


Fig. 1. - Lézardrieux: église.

reconnaissable à son calice et à son bréviaire, le noble à son épée pendant le long de son côté, et un couple de paysans affairés à mettre un tonneau en perce.

En règle générale, les classes sociales sont présentées séparément. Dans l'église de Lambour en Pont-l'Abbé se faisaient face un chevalier arborant un écu sur une sablière, une dame et son page sculptés en haut-relief sur les blochets des angles du transept vers l'ouest. Les nobles consacraient une grande partie de leur temps à la chasse⁷: témoignage de cette activité les chasses à courre relevées dans des sablières comme à Lézardrieux où une meute de chiens poursuit un cerf, tandis que, un peu en arrière, un homme à pied, tenant un chien en laisse, sonne du cor (fig. 1). Puis s'avancent, sur des chevaux, le seigneur et sa dame, séparés par un piqueur. Parmi les divertissements, la musique était fort appréciée de la noblesse: placée entre un joueur de guitare et un flûtiste, une femme pince les cordes d'une harpe, sur la sablière sud de la nef de la chapelle du Loc en Saint-Avé. Le petit chien couché sur sa robe est un auditeur attentif, à moins que les charmes de la mélodie ne l'aient endormi.

Les sculpteurs nous livrent des représentations des classes laborieuses: assis autour d'une table, des banquiers sont occupés à compter leur argent et à transcrire les recettes dans de volumineux registres (sablière conservée au musée de l'Evêché à Quimper). Sur une frise de la nef de l'église de Saint-Thomas de Landerneau (importante cité toilière à l'époque qui nous concerne), brandissant de grands ciseaux, un drapier court après des voleurs qui se sont

emparés d'un sac volumineux, contenant probablement ses économies. Souvenir du temps où le fer était exploité aux environs de la ville de Tréguier⁸, le mineur figuré sur une miséricorde de la cathédrale est rendu avec beaucoup de réalisme: son casque dans une main et dans l'autre une sorte de hache pour extraire le minéral.

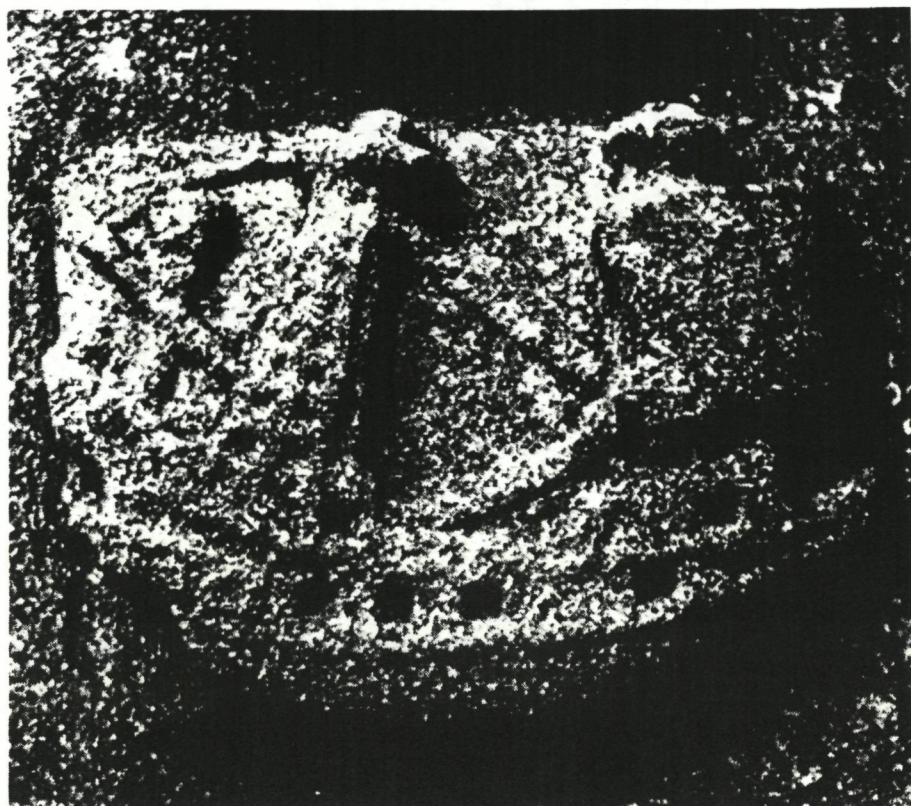
Conservées pour la plupart dans les paroisses rurales et maritimes (les édifices urbains ayant été détruits ou restaurés), les sablières insistent sur la vie de leurs populations: les labours avec la reproduction fidèle d'une charrue comportant un soc en bois, un versoir et deux mancherons, utilisée jusqu'au XIXe siècle (églises de La Roche-Maurice, du Tréhou et à la chapelle Sainte-Marie du Menez-Hom en Plomodiern). A peine la culture de l'artichaut fut-elle introduite dans le Léon, au début du XVIe siècle⁹, que les agriculteurs durent faire face à un parasite. Il est là sur une miséricorde de la cathédrale, sorte de gros ver grossi par l'imagination populaire, tandis qu'armé d'un bâton un paysan va le détruire. Autour de Douarnenez, port sardinier, on distingue des scènes de pêche: sur le mur extérieur du chevet de l'église de Pont-Croix, trois marins sont placés dans un bateau environné de poissons. Des ports de Kerity-Penmarc'h et de Roscoff partaient pour de longs voyages des bateaux reproduits avec fidélité dans le granite des monuments: une caraque – trois-mâts de haut-bord fort répandu au XVIe siècle – sur la façade occidentale des églises de Penmarc'h et de Roscoff (fig. 2); des caravelles sur celles de Poullan, Audierne...

⁷ Près de chaque grand château, s'étaient regroupés des artisans – fabricants de filets, de nasses et de "tramaix" – qui fabriquaient armes et pièges indispensables à la capture des animaux (J.P. LEGUAY, *La noblesse bretonne*, in: *Fastes et malheurs de la Bretagne ducal*, Rennes, Ouest-France Université, 1982, 284.

⁸ A. DE LA BORDERIE, *Histoire municipale de Tréguier. Documents inédits des XVe et XVIe siècles*, Paris, 1894, 56.

⁹ D. & H. KRAUS, *Le monde caché des miséricordes*, New York/Londres, 1976 (traduction Paris, Les éditions de l'Amateur, 1986, 97).

Fig. 2. - Roscoff: église paroissiale.



Musique et danse entraînent toutes les classes de la société. Comme l'Eglise a, de tout temps, manifesté une certaine méfiance à l'égard de la musique populaire, les instruments sont souvent confiés à des animaux, voire des créatures diaboliques. On ne peut qu'être frappé par la prédominance du cochon dans la ménagerie musicale: il joue de la cornemuse sur la façade de l'église Saint-Armel en Ploërmel, et à côté d'une de ses congénères qui file, sur une sablière de la chapelle Blanche en Theix.

Les clercs jugeaient la danse d'inspiration démoniaque. D'aspect repoussant, un démon mène au son de sa cornemuse des danseurs regroupés en une chaîne serrée, sur une sablière de la chapelle Saint-Sébastien du Faouët.

L'esprit du mardi-gras est présent avec la part belle faite aux acrobates et aux jongleurs¹⁰ dont on sait qu'ils se produisaient le jour des fêtes patronales¹¹. Que d'audace et d'originalité dans l'interprétation du réel: des hommes aux membres désarticulés décorent plusieurs miséricordes de la cathédrale de Tréguier. Les personnages masculins qui, dans ces mêmes miséricordes, arborent des bonnets à longues oreilles

sont-ils des évocations de la "fête des fous", tout comme l'homme encapuchonné brandissant une marotte qui accueille le visiteur à l'entrée du porche de l'église de Pluguffan?

D'autres divertissements ont été identifiés: le jeu de bâton – l'épisode s'insérant avec bonheur dans l'étroitesse des sablières de la chapelle Saint-Fiacre du Faouët et du collatéral sud de l'église de La Roche-Maurice où les deux adversaires sont symétriquement allongés de part et d'autre du bâton auquel ils s'agrippent avec force –; le jeu de la crosse auquel s'adonne un des acteurs de l'Annonce aux bergers sur le piedroit du porche de l'église de La Martyre.

2 Thèmes littéraires et culture populaire

Parmi les grands thèmes dont se sont inspirés les artistes, la légende de Merlin¹² constitue un des cycles en vogue pendant tout le Moyen Age. Dans l'église Saint-Pierre à Saint-Pol-de-Léon, l'une des trois peintures murales découvertes au-dessus des arcades de la nef montrait "Satan assis de face, au milieu des flam-

¹⁰ C. PRIGENT, Représentations sculptées de danseurs et de jongleurs comme manifestations de la culture laïque dans les édifices religieux, à l'époque romane et à l'époque gothique, *Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'Archéologie de Bretagne* LXXI, 1993, 279-313.

¹¹ G. MINOIS, L'administration paroissiale dans le Trégor au

XVe siècle, *Mémoires de la Société d'Emulation des Côtes-du-Nord* CVII, 1978, 58-76.

¹² Faisant partie des Romans de la Table Ronde, la légende de Merlin fut popularisée par l'*Histoire des rois légendaires de Grande-Bretagne*, rédigée au XIIe siècle par Geoffroy de Monmouth.

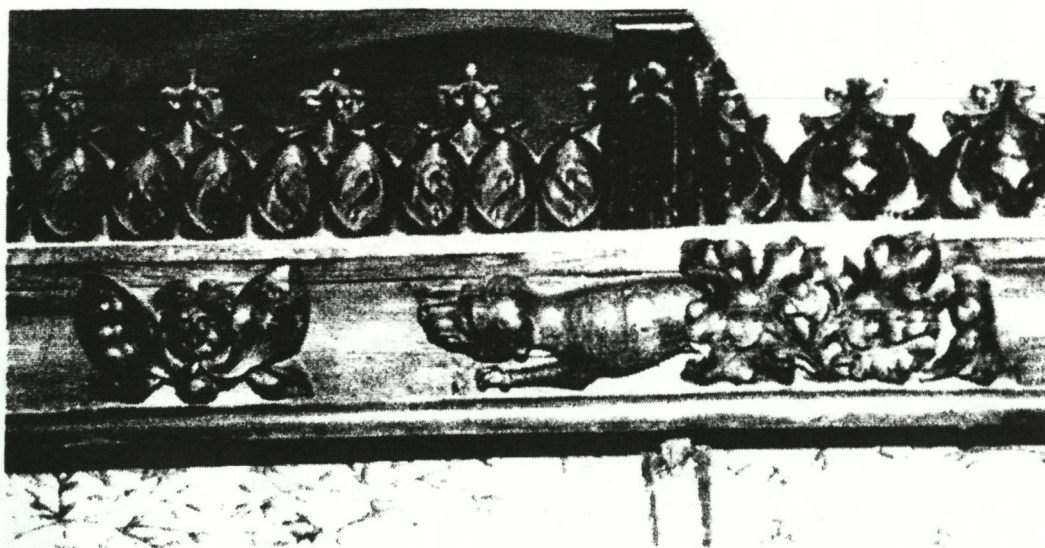


Fig. 3. - Saint-Pol-de-Léon: cathédrale.

mes, les mains ou plutôt les griffes posées sur les genoux; les articulations sont formées de têtes de serpent. Au-dessus de la tête couronnée se voit une représentation de l'Enfer... Un jeune guerrier, le front ceint de fleurs, en armure... se tient au-dessus des flammes, une épée suspendue au-dessus de sa tête"¹³. On constate des analogies entre le Satan breton et un autre Satan contenu dans une enluminure du XVe siècle, mettant en scène le grand concile des diables décidant de la naissance de l'antéchrist Merlin¹⁴.

Pareillement issue des romans arthuriens, la sirène abonde dans la sculpture. A Plourivo, elle tient dans sa main droite un miroir dans lequel se reflète un navire, soulignant ses liens avec Morgane, la fée des eaux et soeur du roi Arthur. Avec ses longs cheveux dénoués sur les épaules, son abdomen recouvert d'algues et sa queue enroulée en spirale, une sirène se détache du pignon de l'ossuaire de Sizun.

Une partie de l'iconographie profane trouve son origine dans les contes et les fabliaux. Un épisode que les imagiers ont apprécié est la harangue du renard aux poules extraite du *Roman de Renart*. Sur une miséricorde des stalles de la chapelle de Brandivy en Grandchamp, provenant de l'abbaye de Lanvaux, Goupil est en chaire; massées au-dessous, des gallinacées l'écoutent dévotement. Lassé de son rôle de prédicateur, il a jeté bas le masque sur la miséricorde voisine où on le voit s'éloigner, une poule entre les dents.

En fait l'art des sculpteurs s'inspire plus modestement des dictons qui attestent la richesse de la culture orale des sociétés rurales. En empruntant le porche

méridional pour pénétrer dans l'église de Lampaul-Guimiliau, le visiteur plonge la main dans un bénitier sur lequel des diables dont la queue trempe dans l'eau bénite semblent saisis de convulsions: rappel du dicton "le diable s'agite dans un bénitier".

Un autre aspect de la culture résulte de la visualisation de proverbes. Un homme se tapant sur les cuisses sur la façade nord de l'église Saint-Nonna de Penmarc'h serait la traduction littérale du proverbe: "c'est trop tard de frapper sur sa cuisse, quand le pet est lâché"¹⁵ – c'est-à-dire: rien ne sert de regretter ce qui est fait. "Il y a trop de chiens après l'os" est exprimé sur un chapiteau de l'église de Runan par deux chiens se disputant un os.

A celui qui ignore les signes du clan, les images peuvent se révéler hermétiques. Sur une sablière de l'église de Guengat court un lièvre blanc – en breton *guen gad* –, jeu de mot sur le nom de la paroisse. Plus loin un sanglier poursuit un renard: allusion aux deux seigneurs prééminenciers – Guengat dont les armes sont meublées de hures de sanglier, et Saint Alouarn (*al louarn*, signifiant le renard).

3 Motifs décoratifs: allégories ou symboles?

Faut-il chercher une explication à tous les motifs? Certains ne sont-ils pas d'ordre purement décoratif comme ces animaux fantastiques qui se mêlent à des têtes humaines et à des oiseaux sur les consoles et les dais des niches des apôtres sous le porche de l'église de Landivisiau?

¹³ P. DE COURCY, Les peintures murales de l'église Saint-Pierre de Léon, *Bulletin de l'Association bretonne*, 1879, 98-102.

¹⁴ Bibliothèque nationale, ms. fr. 96, f° 61 v°.

¹⁵ L.F. SAUVE, Proverbes et dictons de Basse-Bretagne, *Revue celtique* I/III, 1891, 401-413, n° 134.

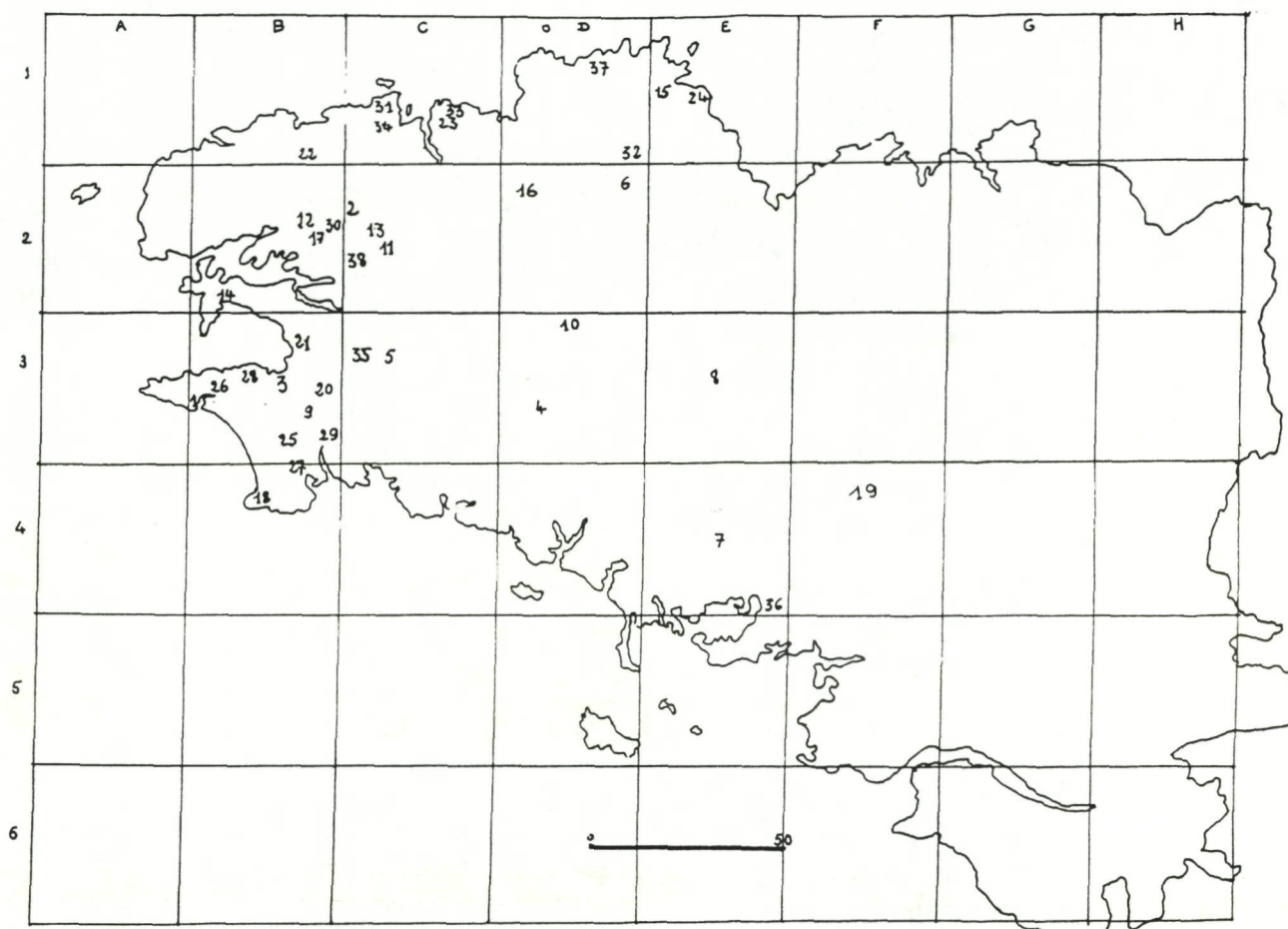


Fig. 4. - Carte des lieux cités.

Audierne	1 B3	Lanvéoc	14 D3	Pont-l'Abbé	27 B3
Bodilis	2 C2	Lézardrieux	15 E1	Poullan	28 B3
Douarnenez	3 B3	Loguivy-Plougras	16 D2	Quimper	29 B3
Le Faouët	4 D3	Pencran	17 B2	La Roche-Maurice	30 B2
Gouézec	5 C3	Penmarc'h	18 B4	Roscoff	31 C1
Grâces-Guingamp	6 D2	Ploërmel	19 F4	Runan	32 D1
Grandchamp	7 E4	Plogonnec	20 B3	Saint-Jean-du-Doigt	33 C1
Gueltas	8 E3	Plomodiern	21 B3	Saint-Pol-de-Léon	34 C1
Guengat	9 B3	Ploubezre	22 B1	Saint-Ségal	35 C3
Kergrist-Moëlou	10 D3	Plougasnou	23 C1	Theix	36 E4
Lampaul-Guimiliau	11 B2	Plourivo	24 E1	Tréguier	37 D1
Landerneau	12 B2	Pluguffan	25 B3	Le Tréhou	38 C2
Landivisiau	13 C2	Pont-Croix	26 B3		

La végétation prête à l'art du temps sa richesse ornementale. Grappes de raisin et feuilles de vigne envahissent les sablières de la chapelle latérale dans l'église de Saint-Jean-du-Doigt. Dans celles des églises de Ploubezre, Plougasnou, Bodilis... le sculpteur a emprunté à la flore marine l'enroulement de ses goëmons.

Le Moyen Age a aimé l'animal. Si on lui confère des postures forcées, il peut se loger partout. Dans les miséricordes des stalles de Tréguier on reste étonné de l'abondant répertoire d'animaux fabuleux aux variantes anatomiques très accusées. Les artistes ont témoigné d'une curiosité vive pour les animaux loin-

tains: un éléphant que flanque une girafe sur la sablière de la chapelle Saint-pierre de Plogonnec; un dromadaire sur le pignon de la chapelle de Keroué en Loguivy-Plougras; un singe sur une miséricorde de Saint-Pol, et voisinant avec un chien, un aigle, un sphinx et un lion sur le mur du chevet de l'église de Kergrist-Moëlou.

Parmi les animaux domestiques, le chien arrive en tête (fig. 3). Il se rue sur un lièvre dont il est séparé par des feuillages, sur la frise de couronnement des stalles de la cathédrale de Saint-Pol; allongé, le museau entre ses pattes, il trône au-dessus du porche de

l'église de Lanvéoc. Iconographie bucolique à l'image de la nature toute proche: un lapin grignote une feuille de salade sur un accoudoir des stalles de Tréguier.

La grande majorité des sculptures animalières seraient restées résolument innocentes, n'eut-été la polysémie des Bestiaires.

Conclusion

Ce serait une erreur de croire que ces figures se sont introduites dans les édifices religieux à la faveur de l'indifférence des clercs. Lorsqu'en 1508, les chanoines de Tréguier commandèrent de nouvelles stalles pour décorer le chœur de leur cathédrale, ils précisèrent dans le contrat: "y aura des bouillons pendantz taillés à feillages et grimasses jusques à remplissement de l'euvre là où il appartiendra..."¹⁶.

Ne peut-on pourtant déceler une intention didactique dans cette iconographie? Entre les sabots des chevaux des labours de Plomodiern s'est glissé un minuscule personnage masculin: allusion à la légende des laboureurs punis pour s'être moqués de la Sainte Famille fuyant les persécutions d'Hérode?

Montrer le mal pour mieux le condamner: ainsi s'expliquerait la présence de péchés capitaux – la paresse sous les traits d'un moine endormi, l'envie sous ceux d'un homme rappelant à lui un chien qui ronge un os (sablière de la chapelle du Loc en saint-Avé); la luxure illustrée par un jeune homme qui entraîne doucement par la main une jeune fille (jubé de la chapelle Saint-Fiacre du Faouët). De même la représentation des fêtes villageoises ne constituaient-elles pas une mise en garde contre des péchés comme la luxure, l'ivrognerie...?

Reste-t-il malgré tout un sens à découvrir dans certaines images, comme semble nous l'indiquer le chien au bas du pignon de la chapelle des Trois-Fontaines en Gouézec, affairé à briser un os pour en extraire ce que Rabelais nommerait la "substantifique moëlle"? Que signifient, en effet, ces douze visages lunaires, successivement empreints de tristesse et de joie, sculptés en bas-relief, trois par côté, sur le socle du calvaire de la chapelle Saint-Sébastien en Saint-Ségal, stylistiquement très proches de ceux de la croix du cimetière de Bodilis? Le sculpteur a-t-il voulu symboliser l'année par le socle, les saisons par les quatre parois et les mois par les douze faces rondes? – une autre manière de rythmer le temps annuel que par les signes du zodiaque, associés aux activités des mois sur la sablière sud de l'église de Runan.

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¹⁶ A. DE BARTHÉLEMY, *Mélanges historiques et archéologiques sur la Bretagne*, Paris, 1856, vol. II, 111-121.

Geoff Potter

Eagle House, Wimbledon Village, London: The excavation of an early 17th century garden

Introduction

Archaeological investigation to the rear of Eagle House, a Jacobean property of c.1613 located within Wimbledon Village, south-west London, took place between May 1991 and January 1992. This formed part of a larger area examined by staff from the Museum of London, and followed planning consent for redevelopment of the site.

Investigation within an area just over 40 m² revealed a formal garden plan and associated terrace, both evidently contemporary with the construction of Eagle House. The main feature of the garden was a parterre, containing a series of gravel and sand paths. These formed a rectangle, divided by diagonal and longitudinal paths and containing clay-lined bedding pits. Facing the house was the terrace, originally retained by brickwork and with steps at one end.

A brief record was made of subsequent garden development. There was also some evidence for earlier activity, including several features of early medieval date (AD 1050-1150).

Location

Eagle House is located at the top of Wimbledon Hill, just to the north of the historic Village and close to extensive areas of open land which form Wimbledon Common (TQ 239712). Although generally steep-sided the Hill is capped by a plateau of High Level Terrace sands and gravels, with the underlying clays only exposed where the ground drops away.

The redevelopment site consisted of two adjoining plots, to the west fronting onto Marryat Road and to the east occupying a large part of the former rear garden of Eagle House. The latter, an area of about 0.26 hectares, is outlined on Fig 1 and forms the subject of this paper.

Archaeological and historical background

Wimbledon Common has produced some Palaeolithic and Mesolithic material, whilst prehistoric settlement is represented by the Late Bronze/Early Iron Age earthwork known as Caesar's Camp (about 1.3 km to the west of Eagle House).

The area has produced few Roman finds, but there is some documentary and archaeological evidence for later Saxon activity (Milward 1983, 7; Potter 1993, 128). A relative dearth of later medieval finds may reflect economic change in the post-Conquest period, and perhaps a shift in settlement to the lower ground of the Wandle Valley.

By the later 16th century Wimbledon Village was well established, and included amongst its inhabitants several notable families, in particular the Cecils. In the 1580s Sir Thomas Cecil built a new and very substantial manor house; now lost, this lay some 800m north-east of Eagle House (Higham 1962).

Another prominent local family was that of Robert Bell, the builder of Eagle House. A local landowner, Bell was also a successful merchant and was active in the development of overseas trade through the East India Company. Between c.1606-11 he was also retained by Robert Cecil (first Earl of Salisbury and brother of Thomas) during the construction of Hatfield House and gardens in Hertfordshire (Stone 1956, 108-109, 125). In this capacity Bell carried out various transactions, including the supply of Caen stone.

Of particular note is a letter written by Bell in 1609 concerning arrangements for the garden at Hatfield. He reports on his discussions with one *Bartholomewe the gardener* and with the Earl's gardener (Mountain Jennings), noting that *we did determine of a plott to be drawn ... wch I think will doe very well* (Hatfield House archive, Box U/72). In subsequent correspondence Bell appears as a possible supplier of vines for the estate (PRO. State Papers Dom. JacI.61/50). It is possible that he was also involved in works at Wimbledon House: Robert Smythson's plan of 1609 depicts a *great Orchard ... now in Plantinge* (Higham 1962, 26; Strong 1979, 60-61).

Eagle House

Eagle House was built about 1613; the exact date is uncertain, although it was described in 1617 as a *fayre new howse* (Jackson 1903, 12). Despite later alteration and addition the house retains the essentials of its original design (Fig 2). The ground plan covered about 19m by 11m; there were three main floors, each with a large central room flanked by smaller rooms and a staircase on either side. The house was of brick, finished externally with Caen stone for the lower windows and quoins. Above the third floor were several bedrooms with gables built into the roof, three at the front and rear and two on each side.

There is evidence that Eagle House replaced earlier buildings (Milward 1989, 33). No trace of these was found in excavation, although an infilled ditch may represent a property boundary.

The archaeological investigation

The initial evaluation consisted of four trenches, with the largest (32 m by 3 m) to the rear of Eagle House. The positive results here led to the implementation of further archaeological measures, including two phases of excavation, a watching brief during redevelopment and preservation *in situ*. The final trench layout consisted of a number of separate and adjoining trenches within a plot some 42 m², and covered a total area of about 660 square metres (Fig 2).

The further work to the rear of Eagle House was undertaken specifically to expose the main elements of a Jacobean formal garden. The garden surface was generally found at a depth of 0.40 m to 0.50 m below present ground level, although on the raised terrace this figure was frequently no more than 0.20m. Deposits overlying the historic garden consisted of a well graded mid to darker brown subsoil and topsoil.

The principal garden features were separated from the underlying natural sand and gravel by about 0.40 m of rather stony mid-brown silty sand. In the area of the terrace made ground was much deeper (0.80 m to 1.50 m), and several large sections were removed by machine.

The results: Prehistoric to Medieval

The investigation produced a very small quantity of residual struck flint. There was also one sherd of probable Roman pottery from a post-medieval context.

Evidence for medieval activity included several linear features of early medieval date (c.1050-1150)

to the west of Eagle House. Within the area of historic garden there were at least two later medieval pits (c.1270-1500), plus three linear features which were not positively dated. Most medieval pottery occurred residually within later garden contexts (notably the terrace embankment), although probably derived from earlier activity on the site.

The 16th century

Only one conclusively post-medieval feature predated the garden development. This was a north-south ditch, originally about 1 m deep by 3 m wide and possibly a property boundary. The ditch was traced for about 22 m, southwards from below the west end of the terrace and following the line of the later garden wall (Fig 9). Excavation produced some pottery, the latest dated to post 1600. Both the date and alignment of the ditch indicate that it closely predated the garden, although its fills were apparently cut by the adjacent wall construction.

The Jacobean formal garden

Investigation to the rear of Eagle House revealed the principal elements of the formal garden. These are shown in Fig 3 and in conjectural reconstruction in Fig 4. For simplicity the following text and the illustrations treat the garden as orientated north to south, although the true axis lies more nearly north-east to south-west.

The garden consisted principally of a parterre marked out by a series of gravel and sand paths. The basis of the design was a rectangle, some 21 m by 15 m, which was bisected by a central north-south path and by two diagonals. The layout was not exactly symmetrical, notably to the east where the path was offset by about 2 m. Flanking the central rectangle were further north-south paths which lay roughly in line with the gable ends of the original house.

To the north of the parterre was a raised terrace, originally retained by brickwork and with a gravel path just to the south. Steps towards the eastern end of the terrace explain the lack of symmetry in the main design, in that the paths on this side of the parterre were constructed primarily as an approach to the terrace. The paths on the western side of the garden possibly mirror this approach, although the extent of the outer two is uncertain.

To the west the garden was enclosed by a brick wall, with a gateway just to the south of the terrace. Immediately inside the gateway were areas of mortar, probably as a base for paving. There was no sign of

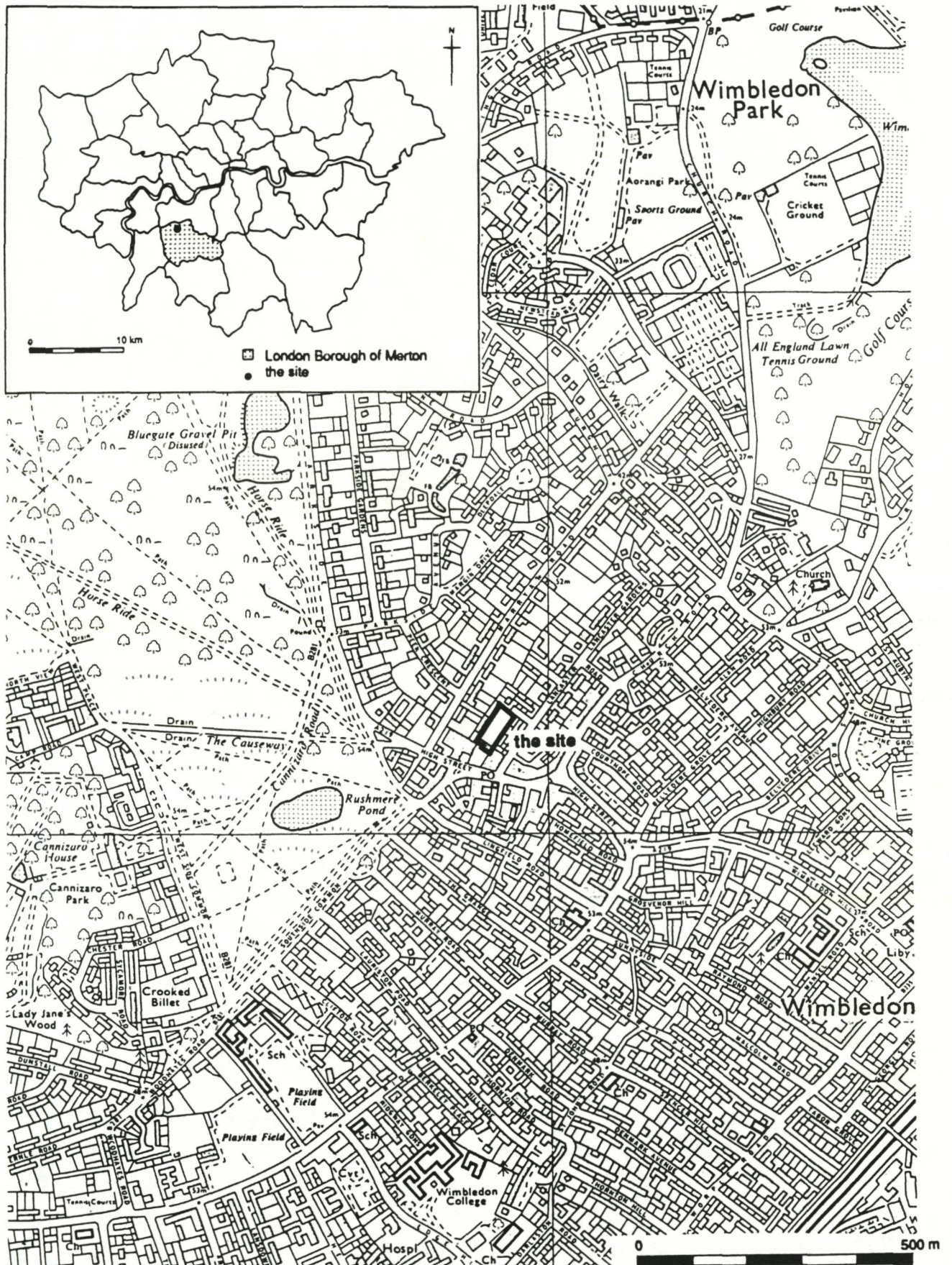


Fig 1. - Site location; inset showing position within Greater London.

an original wall on the eastern side of the garden: the corresponding area was apparently occupied by a

north-south gravel path, with the fairly recent (19th century) brick boundary wall immediately to the east.

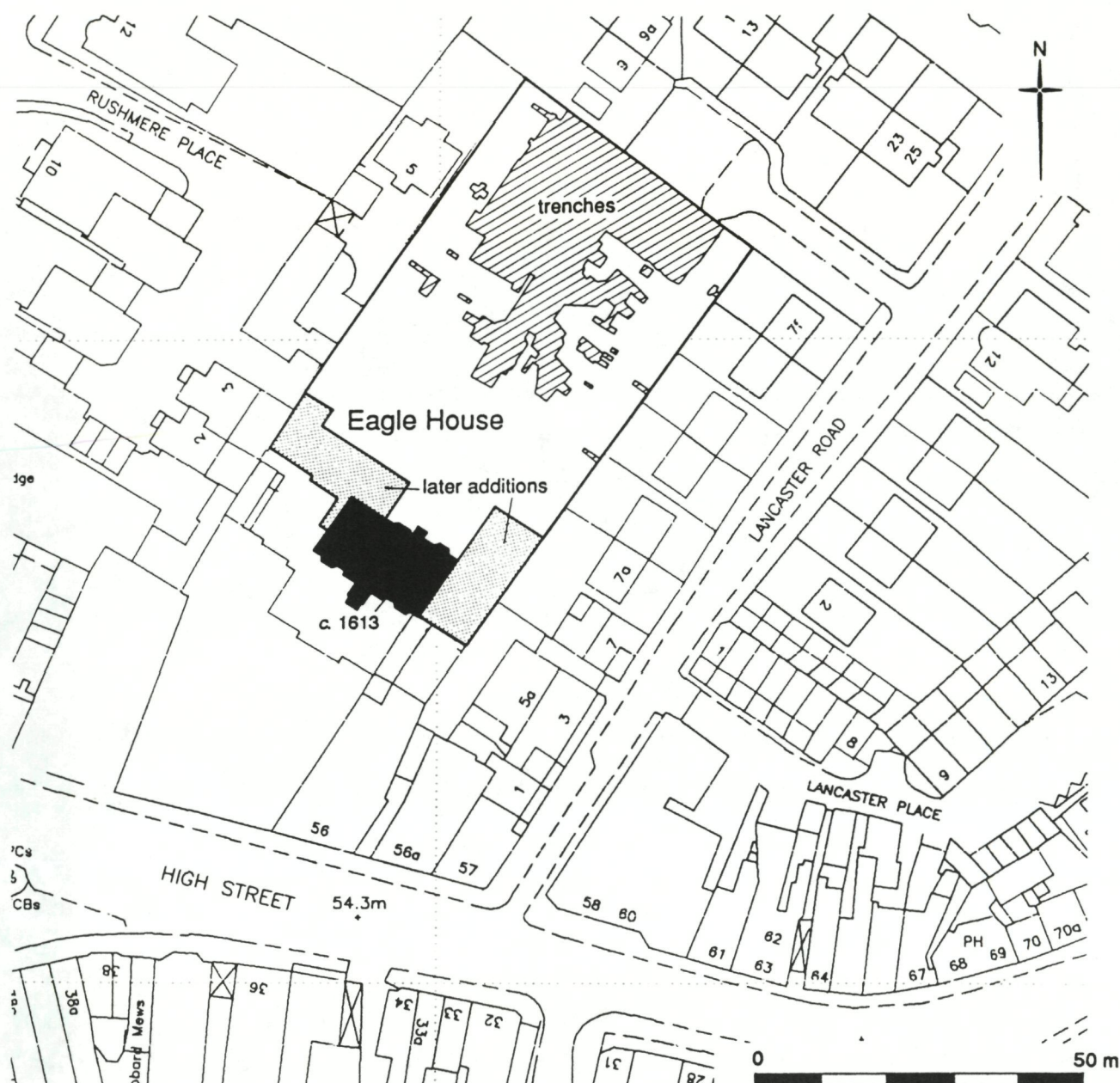


Fig 2. - Eagle House, site outline and archaeological trenches.

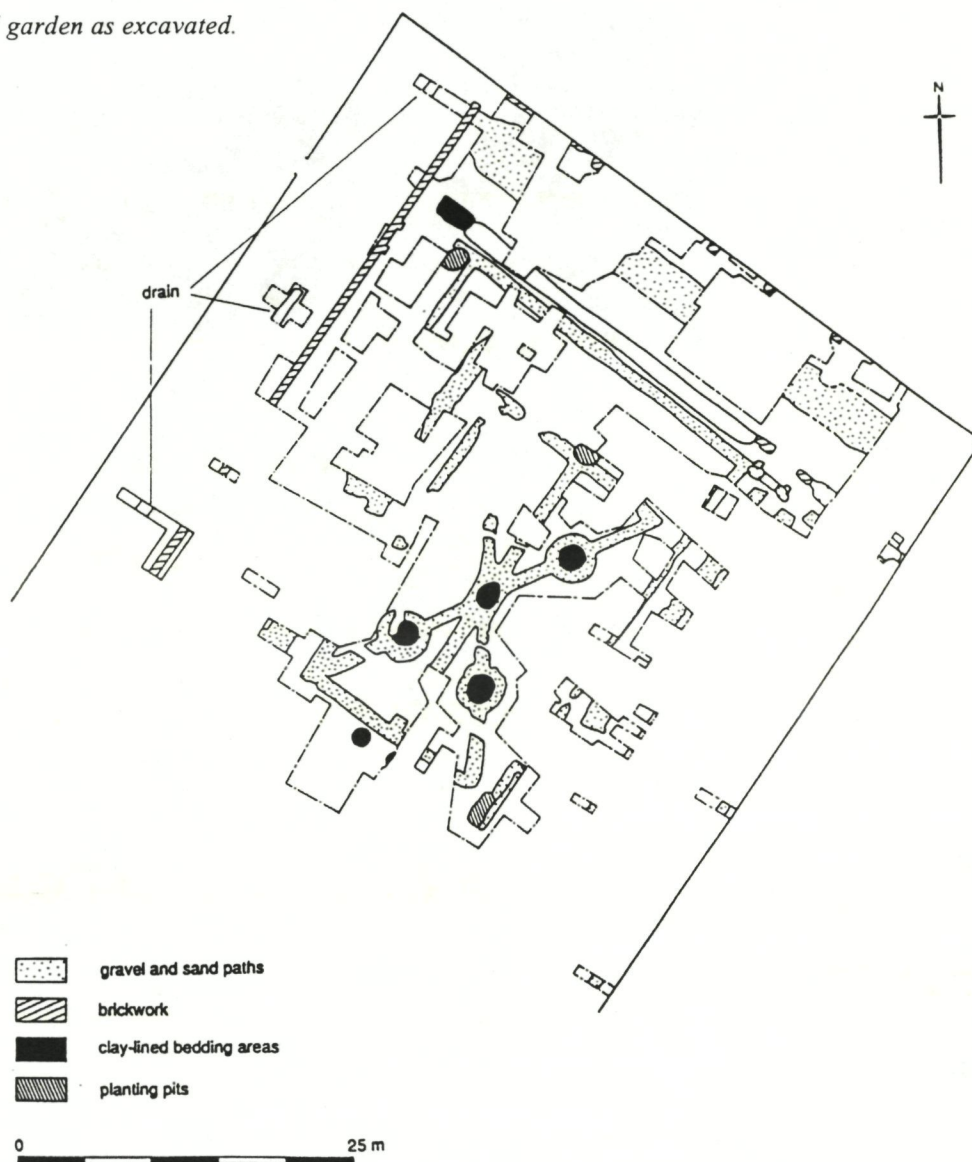
The construction of the garden and terrace is assumed to be contemporary with that of Eagle House (c.1613), a conclusion supported by finds evidence (mainly pottery dating to post 1600). The garden design is also consistent with an early 17th century date, and extensive investigation did not produce any evidence for earlier development.

Details of the excavated garden: the paths and bedding areas

Although the parterre is considered to form a single event the paths within it varied considerably in size and appearance. Width was from about 0.45 m to

1.35 m, reducing to c.0.65 m to 0.90 m within the central rectangle. Depth averaged 0.08 m to 0.20 m, and – except where very shallow – paths were clearly cut into the underlying ground (Fig 5). All the paths were of similar composition, although ranging from orange sandy gravel to mid-brown gravelly sand very similar to the surrounding surface. In general the paths within the central and northern parts of the garden were best defined, whilst those to the east and west were less obvious (though also less fully excavated). In some areas paths could not be established although otherwise likely (such as the westernmost path, which was well defined to the north but disappeared after about 5 m). Elsewhere – as on the eastern edge of the garden – a path was assumed to be

Fig 3. - Plan of the formal garden as excavated.



continuous on the basis of quite limited investigation. No evidence was found for path edging, although it is possible that bedding areas were delineated by plants such as box or rosemary (Anthony 1991, 23).

Within the centre of the parterre each diagonal path contained a circular bedding pit about 1.50 m in diameter. Three of these pits survived more or less intact, plus a central and slightly smaller oval bed. The north-west quadrant had been heavily disturbed but presumably contained a similar feature, as tentatively indicated by the extant southern section of path.

Each of the extant bedding pits was lined with a layer of yellow clay up to 0.13 m thick, presumably to enhance moisture retention and to prevent leaching of nutrients. The maximum depth of overlying soil varied from 0.12 m to 0.30 m, which may also indicate different planting arrangements (Fig 5b & c). It is likely that the postulated north-western bed was of similar form, although now lost. However, there were

two further pits on the southern boundary of the parterre and flanking its central axis. These appeared to be of similar size (c.1.20 m diameter) and to form part of the original design. The western pit was fully excavated and at its base contained a double layer of clay interleaved with sandy silt (Fig 5a).

Towards the south-east corner of the parterre was a probable planting pit, 1.90 m by 1.50 m in plan and 0.55 m deep (although unlined). This was overlaid at its eastern end by a north-south gravel path, so presumably forming part of the original design. It is also possible that a second pit lies just to the east, flanking the easternmost of the three paths on this side of the garden.

A more extensive bedding trench was found at the northern edge of the parterre, occupying the area between the terrace wall and adjacent path except where broken by the steps (Fig 8). In the absence of dating or other evidence this is also assumed to form an original feature.

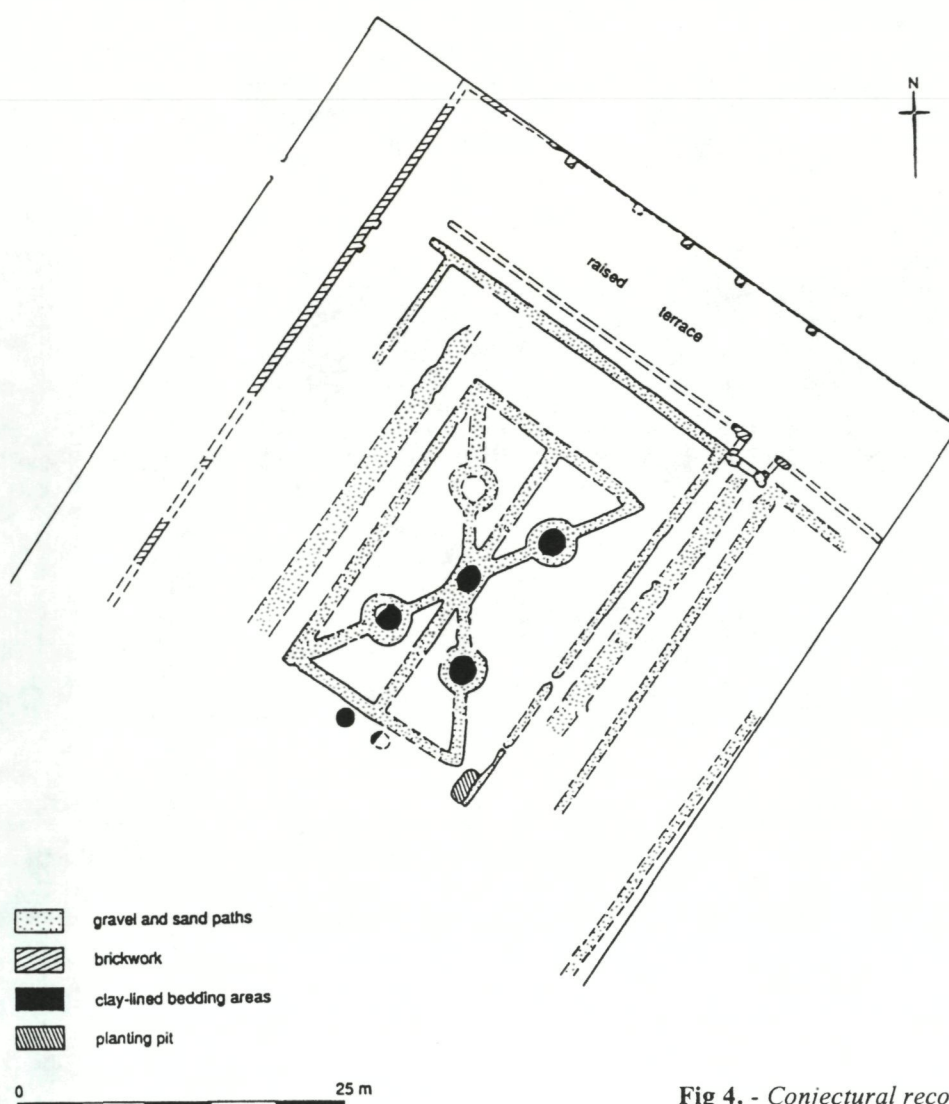


Fig 4. - Conjectural reconstruction of the formal garden.

The terrace

To the north of the parterre and facing the house was the terrace. Prior to excavation this formed an overgrown bank about 0.80 m in height, extending more or less the width of the site.

The original terrace measured about 8 m to 8.50 m front to back, widening slightly to the east. It was constructed between brick retaining walls, and would have stood about 1.10 m above the adjacent parterre. However, excavation of its central and eastern sections revealed a construction level some 0.35 m below the contemporary surface, presumably a result of the removal of topsoil for use elsewhere in the garden (Fig 6). This feature probably extends to other areas, although it was not present at the western end of the terrace (Fig 7).

The southern terrace wall was almost wholly robbed out, although its overall length was established at 32.8 m. To the east there were two extant sections of brick wall, either side of a gap which

marked the position of steps onto the terrace. At the points at which it was removed the brickwork was no more than 0.40 m wide, demonstrating the extent to which the wall line had been overcut by robbing (Fig 8). The wall alignment also appears to have changed slightly to the east of the steps, which partly explains the widening of the terrace noted above. The two sections of *in situ* wall survived to a height of about 0.40 m (five courses), and in addition to brickwork included a few fragments of Caen stone and one larger block of Kentish ragstone.

It is clear from the eastern and western ends of the robber trench that there was no continuous wall around the terrace. To the east the trench fell just inside the site and below the later (19th century) north-south boundary wall. However, to the west the robber stopped short of the original western boundary by some 3.5m, and in this area the wall was replaced by a sloping bank. Further evidence is provided by a single course of brickwork 1.10 m in length, set into the bank on a line with the original wall and

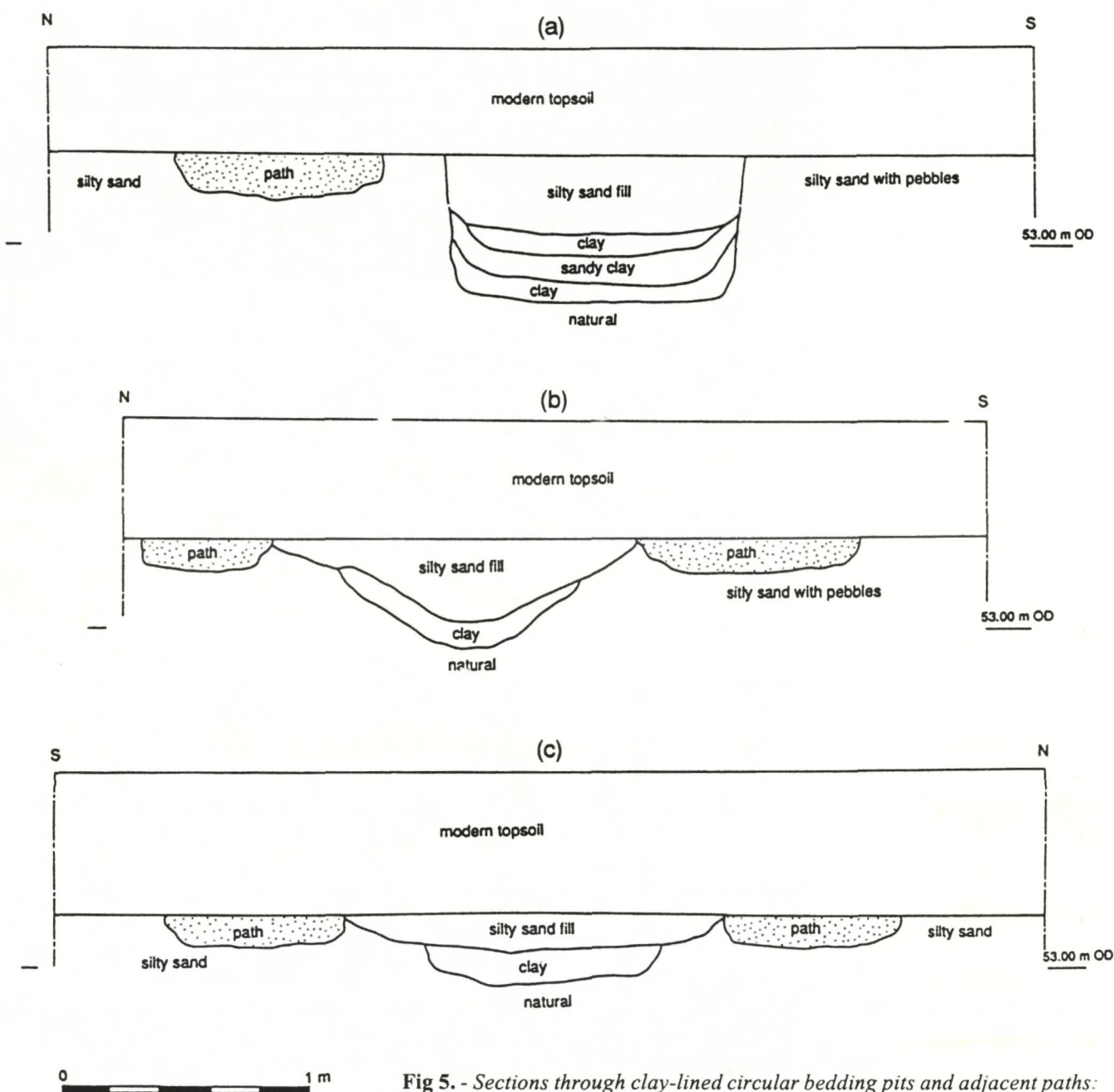


Fig 5. - Sections through clay-lined circular bedding pits and adjacent paths:
a) on the southern edge of the parterre, flanking the central axis
b) the south-west quadrant of the parterre
c) the north-east quadrant of the parterre.

exactly midway between this and the boundary wall to the west (Fig 7). It is possible that this supported a trellis or other timberwork between the two walls, similar to the structures which appear in earlier and contemporary illustration (eg., Harvey 1990, 108).

To the north of the terrace the lower part of the original retaining wall survived, with up to eight courses plus two of rubble foundation. This was directly overlaid by the present (19th century) garden wall, although investigation at one point gave a probable width of 0.48 m. Adjoining the inside face of the original wall were at least four brick bases. Each of these was nearly 0.60 m wide and measured 0.40 m

to 0.58 m front to back, with up to thirteen courses (0.90 m) of extant brickwork (Fig 6). Three of the bases were more or less equidistantly spaced and located on the projected central line and gable ends of the original house. The fourth fell between the central and eastern bases, and it is likely that a further remains unexcavated to the west (Fig 4). It also possible that at least two other bases lie towards the corners of the terrace.

The excavated bases had been partially robbed, to some 0.60 m to 1 m below contemporary ground level. There is no direct evidence for their function, although as they lie *inside* the retaining wall they

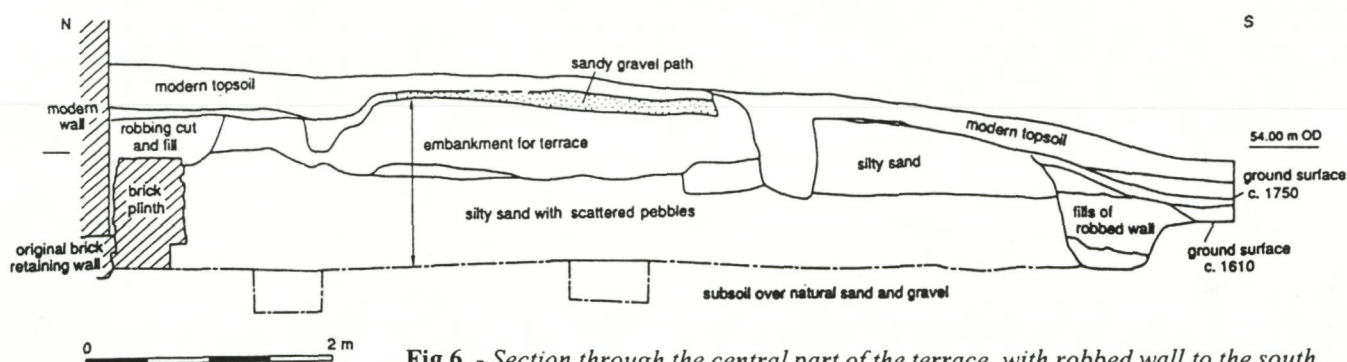


Fig 6. - Section through the central part of the terrace, with robbed wall to the south.

cannot be buttresses. It is most likely that the bases originally formed the foundation for some decorative feature, perhaps a series of urns or statues.

On the top of the terrace investigation revealed a broad gravel path. However, this may represent a later addition and is discussed in more detail below. There was also some indication of a gravel path immediately behind the western part of the south terrace wall, which had subsequently slumped over the robber trench. It is possible that the terrace was originally grassed, in similar form to that subsequently recorded at Wimbledon House (SAC 1871, 120). In the latter example this was supplemented by a row of lime trees (which also appear on Smythson's plan of 1609), although there was no evidence for a such a feature at Eagle House.

The original position of the terrace steps was marked not only a gap in the southern wall, but also by a projecting arrangement of two shallow robber trenches, a small section of brickwork and two post pits (Fig 8). The most likely reconstruction would give six steps, each tread 0.30 m wide and each riser 0.18 m high. The last step would be level with the top of the terrace and flush with the south face of the retaining wall. The foot of the steps was flanked by post pits, each of which apparently held substantial timbers some 0.36 m by 0.40 m in cross-section. These may have supported an arch or similar, although contemporary evidence also suggests free-standing painted wooden posts bearing heraldic emblems or figures (eg., Strong 1979, 35-6; a modern reconstruction is illustrated in Anthony 1991, 78).

Drainage

The underlying sands and gravels produced a well-drained soil, precluding the need for devices such as the deeply cut paths which are recorded elsewhere (eg., Taylor 1988, 47). Nor was there any evidence for fountains or other water features, perhaps also a product of Eagle House's hilltop location.

However, on the western side of the garden were two features of interest, both apparently contemporary with the original construction (Fig 9). A small brick and tile drain ran northwards inside the garden for at least 22 m, before turning to the west and exiting below the gateway in the western wall. Although not conclusively established it is likely that the drain then discharged into a second and larger brick arched drain running from south to north, parallel with and some 2 m outside the wall.

The Eagle House estate

The formal garden formed one component of the estate attached to Eagle House. This was not particularly large, especially when first established; in 1617 it is recorded that adjoining the house were three acres (c.1.2 hectares) of copyhold, plus a small area of freehold next to the kitchen garden (Jackson 1891, 159-60).

There are few other details of the estate layout. The area between the formal garden and house (some 40 m) may have contained a bowling green; certainly observations here during the watching brief did not reveal any evidence for paths or other garden features. There is reference to an orchard (Milward 1989, 33), which may have been sited to the north of the terrace (as in Smythson's 1609 plan of Wimbledon House). Arrangements on either side of the formal garden are uncertain, although at a much later date a kitchen garden is shown to the east (Jackson 1891, 150), whilst stables and other ancillary buildings lay to the west.

Changes in the formal garden

Subsequent to its construction a number of additions and alterations were made to the formal garden. These are not closely dated, although it is likely that most took place during the second to third quarters of

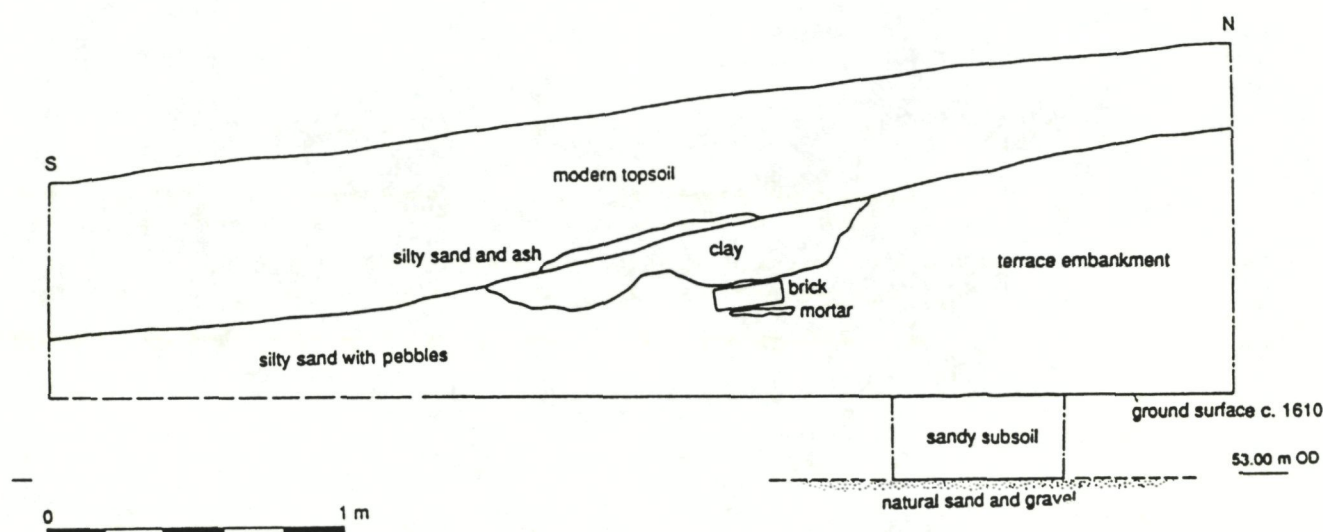


Fig 7. - Section through the west end of the terrace, with later clay base for raised bedding area.

the 16th century. The following changes in particular may be noted:

- Two planting pits were dug within the northern part of garden, in each case close to the junction of two paths. The first pit was located at the junction of the central and northern paths of the parterre, whilst the other lay to the north-west, at the western end of the path below the terrace (Fig 3). The pits were of similar size and shape, roughly circular and bowl-shaped in profile, c.1.10 m to 1.60 m in plan and up to 0.50 m deep. Both pits cut the adjacent paths, whilst that to the north-west was also overlapped by probable resurfacing. This fact, plus the location of the pits, leaves little doubt that they formed simple additions to the original layout.
- A third planting pit (not illustrated) was found immediately below the terrace. This had evidently been dug against the face of the extant wall, at a point midway between its western end and the terrace steps (and as such was subsequently truncated by robbing). However, the pit lay some 2 m to the west of the central axis of the formal garden, suggesting that it postdates this phase, and therefore may also be later than the features noted above.
- A large and more or less rectangular clay base, about 2 m by 1 m in plan, was found at the west end of the robbed out terrace wall. The clay was cut into the terrace embankment at the level of the historic garden, and presumably formed the base for a raised bedding area (Fig 7). The clay would enhance moisture retention, although there was no evidence (*eg.*, tile fragments or stakeholes) for a structure to retain the overlying soil. Probably the support was in the form of turf, wattling or timber planks secured at the corners. Such features appear at least from the later

15th century (*eg.*, Fleming & Gore 1979, 28; Harvey 1990, 116-17; Moorhouse in Brown 1991, 101). Similar clay bases, once again without obvious above-ground support, were also found in excavation of a nearby late 17th garden (Potter 1993, 131).

The secondary nature of the clay base was clearly indicated by an underlying and unrelated course of brick (see above), whilst a silty sand and ash layer immediately above produced a token dated to the third quarter of the 17th century (Boyne 1858, Cat. 1074). The western edge of the clay was also overlaid by short length of north-south gravel path (not illustrated), which may be contemporary in construction.

- As already noted, investigation revealed a broad sandy gravel path running along the top of the terrace (Figs 3 & 6). The date of this is uncertain, although it may well represent an addition to the garden. The path was cut into the original terrace embankment, but produced no datable finds and was overlaid by modern topsoil. Moreover, its width – at least 2.40 m – was closer to the 18th century path described below than to those of the early 17th century.

- The terrace steps underwent substantial alteration. A heavily mortared rubble base some 4.50 m in length by 0.80 m wide was constructed across the line of the earlier projecting arrangement, overlapping this to the east and west by up to 1m. From each end of this feature further brick bases some 0.70 m wide were laid to the north, partially replacing the adjacent sections of terrace wall and cutting about 1.50 m into the embankment behind. These developments produced a substantial three-sided foundation, c.4.50 m wide and 3 m deep. This clearly formed the base for a flight of steps, and may also have supported a standing structure.

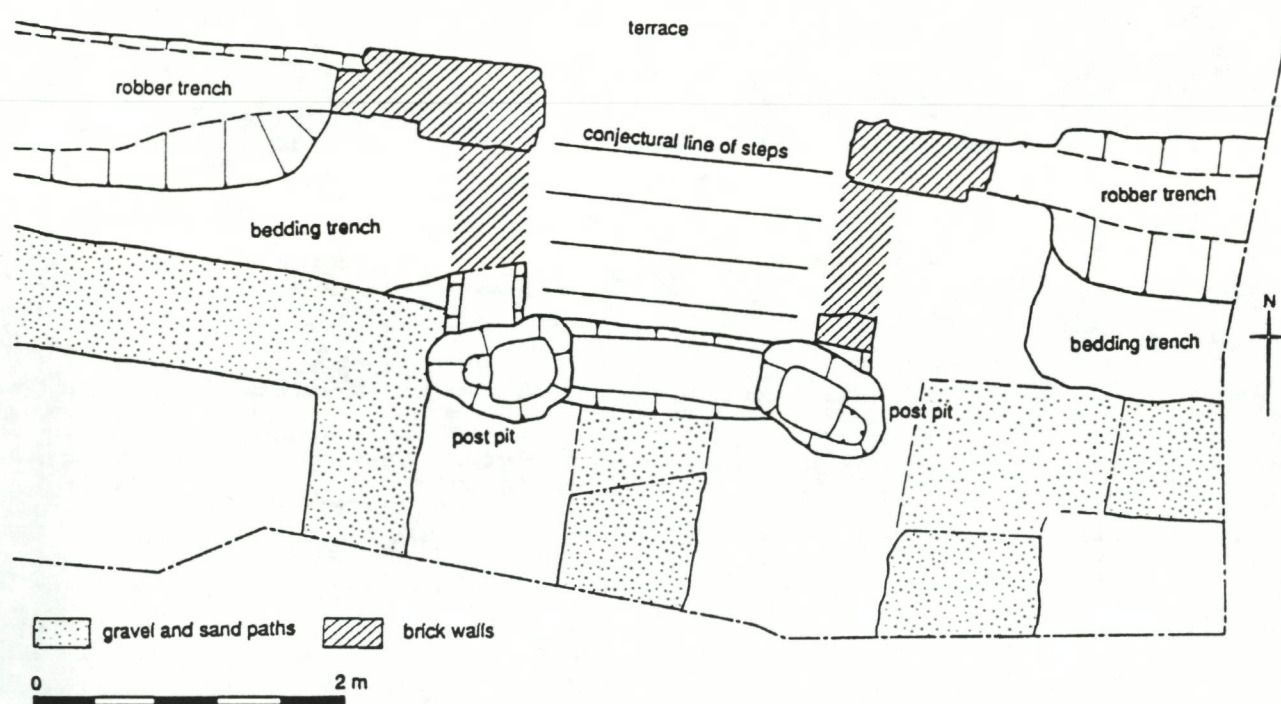


Fig 8. - Plan showing the probable arrangement of the original terrace steps.

Environmental evidence

A number of samples were taken from bedding pits and other parts of the historic garden. The well-drained and fairly acidic soil did not favour organic preservation, and examination produced no more than occasional fragments of bone and charcoal. Some bone was also recovered by hand, again relatively fragmentary and limited to common domesticated animals.

However, Robert Bell's earlier involvement at Hatfield hints at his knowledge of plants; hence his assurance in 1609 that the stock supplied would be *the best ... the lowe countryes can afford* (Hatfield archive, Box U/72). The planting arrangements were mainly handled by John Tradescant, and included visits to Flanders and France and acquisition of a number of rare species (Stone 1956, 125-26). Nevertheless, Bell's overseas interests (including an agent in Amsterdam) may have given him a role here, or at least access to the same markets.

The end of the formal garden

There is relatively little evidence to date the disappearance of the garden. It is possible that this took place in several stages from the late 17th century, and likely that some areas of brickwork outlived the associated parterre. A number of features can be identified in tracing this process:

- To the south of the terrace the Jacobean parterre was generally overlaid by an undifferentiated mid to darker brown garden soil. It may be that the whole area was initially grassed over, in a single event which sealed the historic garden.
- A significant change is denoted by the demolition and robbing of the south terrace wall (Fig 6). This took place in all areas except that of the rebuilt steps, consequently preserving a small part of the original wall. Backfill within the robbing trench included fragments of mortar, brick and tile and occasional Caen stone, whilst pottery and clay pipe give a date of c.1730-50. Removal of the wall may be contemporary with the demise of the garden as a whole, in that both the backfill and adjacent garden features were overlaid by an apparently contiguous soil horizon. However, it is quite possible that the parterre had already gone out of use.
- The north wall of the terrace and adjoining brick bases may also have been removed at this time. However, the survival of the lower courses of brickwork and the existence of a rebuild directly over suggest a separate and later event, perhaps necessitated by failure of the original.
- The west wall of the garden was demolished to below contemporary ground level, leaving a substantial section of brickwork *in situ*. In this case robbing proceeded from a level above that of the Jacobean garden, whilst pottery finds indicate a later 18th century date. Cartographic evidence suggests that this event took place after 1740 (Rocque 1746), but

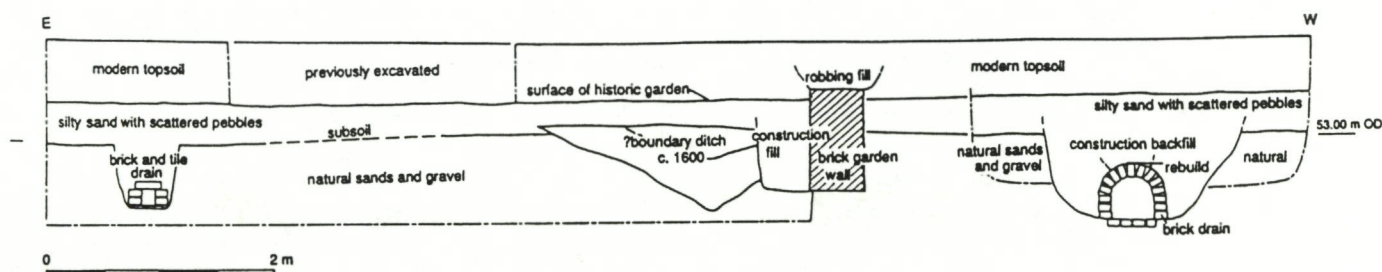


Fig 9. - Section through the western garden wall and earlier ditch, with drains to east and west (c. 6 m to south of gateway).

certainly before the Tithe Survey of 1850. The most likely date is 1789 or shortly thereafter, when Eagle House became a school.

- Within the centre of the site investigation revealed a gravel path some 1.60 m wide. This was aligned north-south on the original central axis of the garden, but was separated from this by the soil horizon which sealed the robbed terrace wall to the north. The path was traced for over 11 m from just south of the terrace, and may well be that depicted in the 1740s (*ibid*).

The disappearance of the formal garden by the 1730s (if not earlier) accords with the contemporary change in ideas. This may be summarised as a new fashion for naturalised and more open gardens, which rapidly displaced the concept of formal design. The results of this were usually drastic and, at least in southern England, almost universal.

Conclusion

The archaeological investigation at Eagle House has provided an unprecedented opportunity to examine the physical evidence for a garden design otherwise very largely known from documentary sources.

The findings are of significance on several levels. Evidence for the formal garden complements the history of Eagle House itself. Moreover, this is a record not of a major estate but of the provincial residence of a wealthy merchant; as such it exemplifies a group once numerous, but today relatively scarce. Nor should the role of Robert Bell be overlooked, given his involvement in one of the great gardens of the period and his extensive overseas interests. Certainly he would have influenced the garden at Eagle House, and it is possible that he was directly responsible for its design and stocking.

Stylistically the Eagle House garden was inspired by Renaissance models of the later 15th to mid-16th century, and may well have contained plants familiar to these. However, the garden also embodied more recent concepts, notably the terrace overlooking a formal parterre and the architectural relationship between

garden and house, which define the Jacobean garden in Britain.

Acknowledgements

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A final note should record the numerous individuals whose work has contributed to the paper: in particular, Phil Emery, Richard Hewett and Bill Smith who worked on site, and Robin Densem who undertook the planning and negotiation. Pottery identification was provided by Roy Stephenson, and the illustrations were produced by Jeanette van der Post.

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Sibylle Ehringhaus

“Was ist häßlich?” oder: Die Kunstgeschichte und ihr schwieriges Verhältnis zur frühmittelalterlichen Kunst

“Wir dürfen im allgemeinen annehmen, daß der Deutsche des Jahres 800 aufgeschlossener, anregbarer war als der des Jahres 300” (Georg Dehio, 1919).

“Von Haus aus war der Deutsche ein Zimmermann” (Wilhelm Luebke, 1890 u. 1927).

Seit die Kunstgeschichte als wissenschaftliches Fachgebiet in Deutschland besteht, tut sie sich schwer, ein angemessenes Verhältnis zur Kunst und zur Epoche des frühen Mittelalters zu gewinnen. Während sie sich intensiv und differenziert mit den sogenannten Hochphasen der europäischen Kultur, wie italienischer Renaissance, französischer Gotik oder deutschem Barock auseinandersetzt, weicht sie einer substanziellen Beschäftigung mit der frühmittelalterlichen Kunstepoche aus. Die Kunst der Merowinger und Langobarden, Sachsen, Angelsachsen und Thüringer wird nicht in gleicher Weise als ‘Kunst’ wahrgenommen. Das Frühmittelalter gilt in den Augen der meisten Fachkollegen immer noch als wenig attraktiv, als sperrig, spröde und unzugänglich. Die Quellen und Monumente treffen innerhalb des Faches kaum auf Aufmerksamkeit und Kunsthistoriker, die sich der Epoche widmen, sehen sich nach wie vor mit Unverständnis und Unkenntnis konfrontiert.

Ich stelle meinem Beitrag die These voran, daß diese Geringschätzung auf das Selbstverständnis und die Lage des Faches zurückweist. Indem die Kunstgeschichte sich der kritischen Selbstreflektion, der Auseinandersetzung mit den geistesgeschichtlichen und ideologischen Wurzeln der Disziplin verweigert, verschließt sie sich der Chance, das frühe Mittelalter als Geschichtsperiode wahrzunehmen, die, wie jede andere historische Epoche, für die Gegenwart rele-

vant ist. Sie nimmt sich damit zugleich die Möglichkeit zu einem fachimmanenten dynamischen Erneuerungsprozeß. Die Last überholter Ideologien und traditioneller Denkmuster wirkt sich im Fall “Frühmittelalter” besonders gravierend aus, denn, wie Otto Karl Werckmeister bereits 1971 bemerkte: “Eine geographisch, historisch und sozial ausgewogene Vorstellung von frühmittelalterlicher Kunst ist dadurch [durch ihre ideologische Vereinnahmung] bis heute verhindert worden.”¹

Ich möchte Ihnen darstellen, wie sich die deutschsprachige Kunstgeschichtsschreibung seit dem frühen 19. Jahrhundert in ihren Ansichten über frühmittelalterliche Kunst selber spiegelt, wie sie bis in die Gegenwart Artefakte den Kategorien “schön” oder “häßlich”, “Kunst” oder “Kunstgewerbe”, “gut” oder “schlecht” zuordnet, wie sie also die erhaltenen Dokumente und Denkmäler zur Bestätigung und wissenschaftlichen Untermauerung ihres Welt- und Geschichtsbildes instrumentalisiert hat.

Nehmen wir ein Beispiel aus dem Bereich der Buchmalerei, jener Gattung frühmittelalterlicher Kunst, die zuerst, bereits zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts, von deutschen Kunstgelehrten beachtet und systematisch untersucht wurde.

Als 1839 der Berliner Kunstschriftsteller Gustav Friedrich Waagen (1794-1868) die Königliche Bibliothek in Paris aufsuchte, um die dortigen Bestände merowingischer und karolingischer Handschriften zu studieren, urteilte er: “Alle abendländischen Denkmale machen gegen die gleichzeitigen, byzantinischen einen sehr rohen und barbarischen Eindruck.”² Waagen beobachtete an den antropomorphen Darstellungen frühfränkischer Handschriften ein “Mißverhältnis der Körperteile”, die unverhältnismäßig “großen Füße und Hände” und die “dicken Köpfe” und sah insgesamt eine “Roheit der Behandlung”.³ Waagens Nachfolger vermitteln uns ähnliche Vor-

¹ O.K. WERCKMEISTER, *Ende der Ästhetik*, Frankfurt a.M., 1971, 75.

² G.F. WAAGEN, *Kunstwerke und Künstler in England und Paris*, 3. Bd., Berlin, 1839, 244.

³ *Ibm*, 233.

stellungen. Sie konstruieren eine Kontinuität aus antiken Traditionen, müssen dabei aber die Vorbilder schuldig bleiben. Wie beispielsweise Anton Springer (1825-1891), der sich in Deutschland als erster ausführlich den frühmittelalterlichen Sakramentaren widmete.⁴ Eine ebenso weit verbreitete Tradition in der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung besteht darin, Kunstwerke auszugrenzen, indem man sie als "häßlich" und ungekonnt beschreibt und ihnen damit das Etikett "Kunst" grundsätzlich abspricht. Die Rezeption des sog. Sakramentars von Gellone (Paris, BN, ms. lat. 12048, um 780) zeigt, wie hartnäckig sich derart überkommene Vorurteile in der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung halten. Sie weist außerdem darauf, wie schwer es Kunsthistorikern, die sich mit frühmittelalterlicher Kunst beschäftigen, fällt, sich mit Kunst zu konfrontieren, die diskontinuierlich erscheint.⁵

Das Sakramentar von Gellone wurde in Deutschland durch französische Publikationen um 1890 bekannt.⁶ Seine reiche und sehr ausdrucksstarke Buchmalerei veranlaßte die Kunstgeschichte zu zahlreichen Kommentaren, die beständig darauf abzielen, die künstlerischen Eigenschaften der Malereien abzuwerten. Woermann glaubte im Jahre 1905 ebenso wie Gutbrod, immerhin sechzig Jahre später, die schlechte Qualität der Bilder erkannt zu haben. Ersterer sah in der Handschrift einen "Provinzmaler" am Werk, der sich "versteigt [...] zu einer rohen Umrißzeichnung des Gekreuzigten zwischen Engeln und zu einer Wiedergabe der 'Sancta Maria' in Frauenkleidung."⁷ Letzterer beobachtet an Hand einer weiblichen Figuration, die als Heilige Agathe bezeichnet ist (fol. 17v): "Die Darstellung des menschlichen Körpers ist noch sehr unbeholfen. Die Kontrastierung von Hüften und Brust mit der schmälere Taille gelang nicht. Der Blick ist stumpf und starr; die Augenbrauen sind stark hoch- und nachgezogen, während die Augenwimpern wie Fransen die Augenlider einfassen. Das Gesicht wirkt wie für das Theater geschminkt."⁸ Und noch 1966 erwähnt Wilhelm von den Steinen das Werk als Beispiel für "...die Barbarei in Schrift, Sprache, Kunst [, die] in sehr weiten

Kreisen noch mindestens bis zum Jahrhundertende [des 8. Jh.] hinreicht."⁹ In dem Nachlaß Wilhelm Koehlers entdeckt man in einer Bemerkung, was ihn beim Anblick dieses 'untypischen' Kunstwerks bewegte: "Man hat den Eindruck, daß ein Mann, der nicht in einer bestimmten Schultradition steht und ungewöhnlich regsam und visuell begabt ist, *sich gehen läßt* und in seinen Initialen sozusagen Glossen *von höchst persönlicher Art* dem Text hinzufügt."¹⁰ Koehler gibt hier den sicheren Posten des auf historischen Weitblick geschulten Forschers auf. Er läßt sich dazu hinreißen, einen ebenso distanzlosen wie aufschlußreichen Einblick in seine Vorstellungen von schöpferischer Produktivität zu gewähren. Seine Darstellung des Schreibers weist im Grunde nur auf seine eigene Unsicherheit gegenüber einem Kunstwerk, das seiner Weltanschauung nicht einzufügen ist. Koehlers Interpretation, wie die der anderen Kommentatoren, sind nicht nur Äußerungen, die eine voreingenommene Auffassung dokumentieren, sondern sie sind auch Ausdruck von Hilflosigkeit. Die Isolierung von Kunst ist für die Rezipienten unumgänglich, wenn das diskontinuierliche Kunstwerk mit Unangepaßtem und Grenzüberschreitendem konnotiert wird. Da es Fragen aufwirft und Verwirrung hervorruft, statt Antworten zu bieten oder Bekanntes zu bestätigen. Es wirkt bedrohlich und muß deshalb aus dem eigenen Gesichtsfeld wie aus der fach-internen Diskussion entfernt werden.

Einen produktiven Ausweg aus dieser problematischen Situation kann die moderne Kunsttheorie weisen: Das Sakramentar von Gellone erscheint im Sinne Umberto Ecos als ein 'offenes Kunstwerk'. Es liest sich als 'epistemologische Metapher' eines disparaten Zeitalters.¹¹ Gerade wegen seiner Disharmonien, wegen seines individuellen Charakters, der eine pluralistische Vielfalt mit widersprüchlichen semantischen und stilistischen Beziehungen widerspiegelt, entspricht es eben nicht einem systematisierten und komponierten Kosmos, vielmehr stellt es einen Reflex auf die bestehende Umbruchsituation dar. Diese Handschrift kann demnach geradezu als paradigmatisch für die Epoche angesehen werden. Sie ist ein sinn-

⁴ A. SPRINGER, *Der Bilderschmuck in den Sacramentarien des frühen Mittelalters*, Abhandlungen der phil.-hist. Classe der königlichen sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften 11-1890, Leipzig, 1889, 346.

⁵ Zum Begriff der Diskontinuität s.: U. ECO, *Das offene Kunstwerk*, Frankfurt a. M., 1990, 164-165.

⁶ Vgl.: W. LÜBKE, *Geschichte der deutschen Kunst*, Stuttgart, 1890, 21-22; K. WOERMANN, *Geschichte der Kunst aller Zeiten und Völker*, Leipzig/Wien, 1900/05, Bd. 1, 193; A. SPRINGER, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte II: Frühchristliche Kunst und Mittelalter*, Leipzig, 1919, 112.

⁷ K. WOERMANN, a.a.O., Bd. 2, 103.

⁸ J. GUTBROD, *Die Initiale der Handschriften des 8.-13. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart, 1965, 75.

⁹ W. VON DEN STEINEN, in: W. BRAUNFELS (Hg.), *Karl der Grosse, Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, Düsseldorf, 1965-68, Bd. 2, 11.

¹⁰ W. KÖHLER, *Buchmalerei des frühen Mittelalters, Fragmente und Entwürfe aus dem Nachlaß*, hg. von F. MÜTHERICH & E. KITZINGER, München, 1972, 101 (Hervorhebungen, S.E.).

¹¹ U. ECO, a.a.O.

bildhafter Ausdruck der historischen Situation. Ihre Isolation und Ausgrenzung führt unweigerlich zu Geschichtsverfälschung.

Ein frühmittelalterliches Denkmal, das nicht etwa ausgeschlossen, sondern umgekehrt kontinuierlich und mühsam, unter Zuhilfenahme von stilkritischen Umdeutungen, ideologisch vereinnahmt wurde, ist das Theoderich-Grabmal in Ravenna (um 520). Seine große Popularität seit den letzten Dekaden des 19. Jahrhunderts gründet sich nicht zuletzt auf Felix Dahns historischen Roman *Ein Kampf um Rom* von 1876, in dem der Ostgote Theoderich der Große eine Hauptrolle spielt. Das Buch erschien in demselben Jahr, als Richard Wagner die Erstaufführung seiner Oper *Ring des Nibelungen* in Bayreuth vorbereitete. Beide Werke verbindet eine Geschichtsauffassung, die man heute befremdlich finden wird, die damals jedoch genau den Nerv der geistigen Atmosphäre in Deutschland traf. Wagners wie Dahns Geschichtsdarstellung wird von Mythen bestimmt. “Es war eine schwüle Sommernacht des Jahres fünfhundertsechszwanzig nach Christus”. Der Beginn von Dahns Roman macht nur allzu deutlich, wie er mit Stimmungen, Emotionen und dem Sagenhaften spielt, um sein Publikum zu gewinnen. Für Wagner ist Pathos und eine geistig aufgeladene Naturmetaphorik zentraler Bestandteil seiner Mythenbildung. Er äußert sich selbst bereits 1848 präzise dazu, welche Form der Geschichtsinterpretation er für die wahrhaftigere hält. “Die nackte Geschichte an und für sich bietet uns überhaupt nur selten, stets aber unvollkommen das für die Beurteilung der innersten (gleichsam instinktmäßigen) Beweggründe des rastlosen Drängens und Strebens ganzer Geschlechter und Völker genügende Material dar: wir müssen dies in der Religion und Sage suchen, wo wir es dann auch in den meisten Fällen mit überzeugender Bestimmtheit zu entdecken vermögen.”¹² Vor diesem Hintergrund erscheint die – zur selben Zeit ebenso mythisch überfrachtete – Beschäftigung mit dem Theoderich-Grabmal auf kunstwissenschaftlicher Seite kaum verwunderlich. In den nur drei Jahrzehnten um die Jahrhundertwende, also etwa zwischen 1880 und 1910 vollzog die deutsche Kunstgeschichtsschreibung eine

Neuzuschreibung des Denkmals. Während es beispielsweise noch von Oscar Mothes 1884 als in seinen Grundzügen von antiken, also römischen und byzantinischen Traditionen verhaftetes Bauwerk beschrieben wurde¹³, sah es 1908 der Architekturhistoriker Albrecht Haupt als erwiesen an, daß das ravnatische Bauwerk germanischen Ursprungs sei.¹⁴ Die Umdeutung gründete zum größten Teil auf der mythischen Verklärung des Germanischen, das durch die Theoderich-Legende an das Denkmal geknüpft war. Um dieser, auch unter damaligen Gelehrten, nicht vollständig überzeugenden Zuschreibung ein ‘wissenschaftliches’ Fundament zu geben, fand sich ein Element des Bauwerks, das den Mythos zu bestätigen schien. Der sogenannte Zangenfries, ein Schmuckelement, das die Kuppel gegenüber dem Baukörper absetzt, galt nun als Beleg für die germanische Herkunft des gesamten Bauwerks. Albrecht Haupt bestätigte durch seine prächtig und populistisch aufgemachten Veröffentlichungen diese Neuzuschreibung und bestärkte darüber hinaus die Rasse-Ideologie.¹⁵ Der Zugriff durch die NS-Propaganda war also gut vorbereitet: Das Theoderich-Grabmal wurde von der nationalsozialistischen Kulturmaschinerie, seit der Jahrhundertwende durch die Kunstwissenschaften legitimiert, nach 1936 als erstes germanisches Bauwerk ideologisch ausgeschlachtet.¹⁶

Festzuhalten bleibt: Das Theoderich-Grabmal hat als identitätsstiftendes Monument für das Deutsche Reich nach 1871 und die nationalsozialistische Diktatur nach 1933 eine wichtige Rolle gespielt. Mit Hilfe der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung konsolidierte man in ihm für das junge deutsche Nationalgefühl eine historische Verwurzelung. Durch eine schleichende Umbewertung seiner charakteristischen Bestandteile wandelte sich das Bild des Kunstwerks von einem primär auf römische Vorbilder zurückgehenden, hin zu dem genuin ersten ‘germanischen’ steinernen Bauwerk. Daneben sah man mit dem Aufschwung historischer Mythologien und Geschichtserzählungen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts das Denkmal in einem neuen Licht. Zumal durch populäre Romane wie Felix Dahns *Ein Kampf um Rom* und Wagners *Ring des Nibelungen* ließ sich das Theoderich-Grab-

¹² Richard Wagner, zitiert nach: L. GALL, Gegenwart und Mythos in Richard Wagners ‘Ring’, in: *Deutschlands Weg in die Moderne. Politik, Gesellschaft und Kultur im 19. Jahrhundert*, hg. von H. HARDTWIG & H.-H. BRANDT, München, 1993, 245.

¹³ O. MOTHES, *Die Baukunst des Mittelalters in Italien*, Jena, 1884, 209.

¹⁴ A. HAUPT, Die äußere Gestalt des Grabmals Theoderichs zu Ravenna und die germanische Kunst, *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Architektur* 1, 1907/08, 44.

¹⁵ A. HAUPT, *Die älteste Kunst insbesondere die Baukunst der Germanen*, Berlin 1908. DERS., *Das Grabmal Theoderichs des Großen zu Ravenna*, Monumenta Germaniae Architectonica, Bd. 1, Leipzig, 1913.

¹⁶ Mehrfach in der Zeitschrift: *Germanen-Erbe. Monatsschrift für deutsche Vorgeschichte*, hg. v. H. REINERTH [Amtl. Organ des Reichsbundes für deutsche Vorgeschichte und die Hauptstelle Vorgeschichte des Beauftragten des Führers für die gesamte geistige und weltanschauliche Schulung und Erziehung der NSDAP], 1.1936-6.1941.

mal nun als konkretes Zeichen sagenhafter 'germanischer' Vergangenheit lesen. Deutlicher als anderswo tritt an diesem Werk zutage, wie stark das Bedürfnis nach einer eigenen nationalen Identität in Deutschland war und wie dieses sich mit mythischen Vorstellungen und rassistischer Gesinnung vermischen konnte.

Weiterhin zeigt dieses Beispiel, daß zu der politisch-ideologisch motivierten Vereinnahmung eines Kunstwerkes die Loslösung vom konkreten Gegenstand gehört. Schleichend überlagern es Konnotationen, die historisch-mythische, imperialistische, chauvinistische, emotionale oder affirmative Funktionen der Interpreten transportieren. Die Voraussetzung für diese ideologische Inbesitznahme ist die angebliche Makellosigkeit des Kunstwerks. Individuelle Merkmale oder innere Widersprüche nehmen die Rezipienten im Kunstwerk nicht wahr, wenn es für sie propagierte Utopien in idealer Weise versinnbildlicht. Schließlich wirkt es nur identitätsbildend und herrschaftsstabilisierend, wenn es symbolhaft für etwas und nicht für sich allein steht.

Ein weiteres Beispiel.

Quantitativ betrachtet, bildet das Korpus frühmittelalterlicher Denkmäler die ornamentierte Kleinkunst aus Gräbern: Fibeln, Schnallen und Spangen. Von kunsthistorischer Seite findet dieser Denkmälerschatz, gerade wegen seines massenhaften Auftretens und seiner unspezifischen Erscheinungsform, vergleichsweise geringe und späte Beachtung. Es haftet dieser Kunstgattung etwas Profanes und Kunstgewerbliches an, im Gegensatz zu individuellen Kunstwerken aus mittelalterlichen Bibliotheken, wie illuminierten Handschriften, oder aus Kirchenschätzen, wie Monstranzen, Reliquiaren und Kelchen. Besonders nach 1945, als sich die deutsche Kunstgeschichte auf das sakrale und christliche Element des Frühmittelalters konzentrierte, führte dies dazu, daß der Fundus ornamentierter Kleinkunst in der kunsthistorischen Diskussion in Vergessenheit geriet. Bis heute wird er deshalb – unter Mißachtung gegenüber den Traditionen der Fachgeschichte – der Archäologie und der Vorgeschichte überlassen.

Die Kunstgeschichte verschloß sich hier einem bedeutenden Themengebiet, der Debatte um das Ornament, an der zahlreiche deutsche und deutsch-

sprachige Kunsthistoriker um die Jahrhundertwende beteiligt waren. Schließlich erschienen damals die bis heute wegweisenden Untersuchungen von Franz Wickhoff (1853-1909), Alois Riegl (1858-1905), August Schmarsow (1853-1936), Bernhard Salin und Wilhelm Worringer (1881-1965), die entweder die frühmittelalterliche Grabkunst direkt miteinbeziehen oder sie mittelbar betreffen, weil die historische Epoche ihrer Entstehung angesprochen ist.¹⁷ Bei allen Differenzierungen in der Betrachtungsweise und der Behandlung des Materials durch diese unterschiedlichen Verfasser charakterisierte die damalige Diskussion, daß die einzelnen Objekte oder Objektgruppen, die Kunstgattung oder deren kulturhistorisches Umfeld dabei keine Rolle spielten. Man interessierte sich statt dessen ausschließlich für das Formale, für das Dargestellte, für die Ornamentik.

Von epochaler Bedeutung für die Frühmittelalter-Rezeption war und bleibt bis heute Bernhard Salins Studie von 1904, die *Altgermanische Thierornamentik*.¹⁸ Das Werk erregte damals gerade auch unter Kunsthistorikern großes Aufsehen und wurde dankbar aufgenommen. Es gehört bis heute zu den richtungsweisenden Arbeiten der archäologischen und kunsthistorischen Forschung über das frühe Mittelalter, jedoch ohne daß eine gründliche und kritische Revision stattgefunden hätte. Weder die Beweggründe für seine Entstehung noch seine Wirkung auf die Entwicklung der Wissenschaften wurden überprüft oder in Frage gestellt. Dabei führte die Untersuchung des schwedischen Archäologen zu einer folgenreichen Wendung in der europäischen Kunsttopographie: Erst Salins spektakuläre Studie ermöglichte es, der Anschauung Einhalt zu gebieten, daß das antik-mediterrane Kulturerbe auf alle kulturellen und künstlerischen Bereiche in Nordeuropa einwirkte. Sie setzte außerdem diesem bislang allgemein anerkannten kulturellen Nord-Süd-Gefälle ein neues und augenscheinlich überzeugendes Gedankengebäude entgegen. Sie hat deshalb auf Vertreter völkischer Positionen in den nordeuropäischen Ländern wie ein Akt der Befreiung gewirkt und fiel nicht zuletzt darum auf so fruchtbaren Boden.

Wie er gleich am Anfang seiner Untersuchung betont, beabsichtigt Salin, "dem nationalen Stilgefühl auf den Grund zu gehen".¹⁹ Seine Material-

¹⁷ F. WICKHOFF, *Römische Kunst (Die Wiener Genesis)*, Wien, 1895; A. RIEGL, *Stilfragen. Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte der Ornamentik*, Berlin, 1893; DERS., *Die spätrömische Kunstindustrie nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn im Zusammenhang mit der Gesamtentwicklung der bildenden Künste bei den Mittelmeer-völkern*, Wien, 1901; A. SCHMAROW, *Grundbegriffe der Kunstsvölkerei am Übergang vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*, Leipzig/Berlin, 1905; B. SALIN, *Die alt-*

germanische Thierornamentik. Typologische Studie über germanische Metallgegenstände aus dem IV. bis IX. Jahrhundert, nebst einer Studie über irische Ornamentik, Stockholm, 1904; W. WORRINGER, *Abstraktion und Einfühlung. Ein Beitrag zur Stilpsychologie*, München, 1987.

¹⁸ B. SALIN, a.a.O.

¹⁹ *Ibm.*, 3.

grundlage bildet dafür, wie sich viele von Ihnen erinnern werden, die sog. ‘Fibel mit umgeschlagenen Fuß’, die er aus über einhundertsechzig europäischen Sammlungen zusammengestellt hat.²⁰ Diese Fibeln gelten, so Salin, aufgrund ihrer Ornamentik als prototypische künstlerische Äußerungen der ‘Germanen’, eben als Modelle der ‘altgermanischen Tierornamentik’. Für Salin stand demnach fest, daß das Nationale mit dem, was er und viele andere für ‘germanisch’ hielten, übereinstimmt. Schon in dieser stillschweigend angenommenen Voraussetzung, der Anerkennung des nationalen Geschichtsmythos, liegt die Fragwürdigkeit der gesamten Salinschen Unternehmung begründet. Bereits die Auswahl des untersuchten Materials ist im Hinblick auf seine Absicht erfolgt: der Herausbildung einer eigenständigen nationalen Kulturentwicklung. Das Ergebnis seiner Studie kann also kaum überraschen, denn es ist durch seine Ausgangsposition bestimmt. Der Germanenmythos bildet die *conditio sine qua non* seiner Vorgehensweise.

Salins Untersuchung führte zu folgendem Schluß: Mit dem Ende der Kulturbewegungen bis zum 6. Jahrhundert müssen die künstlerischen Einwirkungen aus dem Süden Europas ihren Abschluß gefunden haben. Wobei auch schon zu Beginn der Entwicklung auf der Krim, die zunächst “halbrömische” Fibel von “germanischen” Händen umgeformt wurde, demnach also “germanischen” Ursprungs sei.²¹ Treffend faßte Alois Riegl die Bedeutung der Salinschen Untersuchung zusammen. Seine Worte machen zugleich deutlich, wie stark das Bedürfnis war, sich von der überkommenen Vorstellung, dem Primat des antikeuropäischen Kulturraums, zu emanzipieren. “Die eigentliche Ausbildung der germanischen Tierornamentik erfolgt erst seit dem Ende des 5. Jahrhunderts. Der Norden hat jetzt gar nichts mehr vom Süden zu empfangen; er entfaltet nun seine Ornamentik ausschließlich nach den Bedürfnissen seines ureigenen germanischen Geschmacks.”²²

Salins Beitrag, hierin liegt seine wissenschafts- und geistesgeschichtliche Bedeutung, konstituierte zum erstenmal die langersehnte kulturelle Unabhängigkeit des Nordens vom Süden Europas und dies scheinbar wissenschaftlich fundiert und methodisch präzise. Sein Buch entsprach dem Ansinnen national und völkisch Gesinnter, die sich der wissenschaftlichen Bestätigung des Germanenmythos nun bedie-

nen und außerdem das künstlerisch ‘Eigene’ bestimmen konnten, um sich gegenüber den ‘Anderen’, den Fremden, abzugrenzen.

Die Anerkennung des ‘Germanischen’, also des nationalen Geschichtsmythos, ging in Deutschland nach der Reichsgründung von 1871 mit einer kontinuierlichen Aufwertung sog. germanischer Kunst einher. Kunsthistoriker leisteten einen bedeutenden Anteil an der wissenschaftlichen Legitimierung dieses Mythos’, indem sie konkrete Kunstgegenstände zum Objekt seiner Aussage machten und ihn somit in die real und sinnlich erfassbare Gegenwart übertrugen. Bis 1933 vollzog sich der Vereinnahmungsprozeß eines Korpus’ frühmittelalterlicher Denkmäler im Dienste der nationalen Idee, der knapp einhundert Jahre zuvor höchstens zum “geübten Handwerk” (Franz Kugler, 1842) zählte. ‘Germanisch’, also ‘deutsch’ bezeichnete man im wesentlichen nun all jene Werke, die das sog. ‘germanische Tierornament’ aufwiesen. Die theoretische Grundlage dafür bildete Salins Studie. Dabei wurden historisch höchst relevante Faktoren wie Entstehungszeit, Herkunft oder Kunstgattung nicht berücksichtigt. Allein das Etikett ‘germanisches Tierornament’ genügte, um einen weit verstreuten, in jeder Beziehung tatsächlich disparaten Denkmälerschatz zusammenzufassen.

Bis 1945 war der Germanenmythos ein zentraler Bestandteil der Rezeptionsgeschichte frühmittelalterlicher Kunst in Deutschland. Die Kunstgeschichtsschreibung nahm erst nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs eine Zäsur vor. Sie versuchte nun das ‘Germanische’ aus dem Frühmittelalter herauszulösen und führte stellvertretend den Mythos vom christlichen Abendland ein, wie die ersten Kunstaustellungen nach 1945 in Deutschland beweisen.²³ Auch die erste Kunsthistorikertagung nach 1945 in Deutschland, die 1948 in Brühl stattfand, wurde von dem Wunsch getragen, unbedingt den Bruch mit der ideologisch überfrachteten unheilvollen und nahen Vergangenheit herbeizuführen, zugleich aber dem Bedürfnis nach einer neuerlichen historischen Verwurzelung in der Geschichte nachzukommen.²⁴ Einerseits sollte vermieden werden, “Totes zu konservieren” und statt dessen beabsichtigte man “das Lebendige, das zu uns gehört, zu erhalten”, andererseits sei die “Forderung des Tages” die “Besinnung auf unsere Ursprünge, damit wir zu uns selbst zurückfinden”.²⁵ Man entsprach diesem Wunsch,

²⁰ *Ibm.*, VI-IX.

²¹ *Ibm.*, 8-9.

²² Rezension von A. RIEGL, in: *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* Nr. 3, 167, 1905, 231.

²³ *Ars Sacra. Kunst des frühen Mittelalters*, München, 1950; *Werdendes Abendland an Rhein und Ruhr*, Essen, 1956; Karl

der Grosse – Werk und Wirkung, Aachen, 1965; *Rhein und Maas. Kunst und Kultur 800-1400*, Köln und Brüssel, 1972 u. a.

²⁴ Vgl. die Einführungsrede Herbert von Einems, in: *Kunstchronik* 1, 1948, Heft 10 (o.S.).

²⁵ *Ibm.*

einfach durch eine neue Begrifflichkeit: Was ehemals der Epoche des Heidnischen und 'Germanischen' zugeordnet wurde, stand nun unter dem Vorzeichen des Christlichen und 'Romanischen'.

Obgleich die deutsche Kunstgeschichte nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg die gemeinsamen christlichen Wurzeln Europas in einer vernationalen historischen Epoche herausstrich, half dies in der wissenschaftlichen Praxis nicht darüber hinweg, daß die eigene Wissenschaft seit ihren Anfängen das frühe Mittelalter dazu benutzt hatte, um deutsches Nationalbewußtsein zu befördern. Das Fach Kunstgeschichte wich damit zugleich nur dem profan-volkstümlichen und heidnischen Element in der frühmittelalterlichen Kultur aus, das mit dem 'Germanischen' seit Jahrzehnten verbunden worden war. Das frühe Mittelalter und die europäische Idee sahen Kunsthistoriker nun ausschließlich vor dem Hintergrund seiner christlich-lateinischen Überlieferung. Das vereinigende Band des Mythos 'Abendland' glaubten sie in der christlichen Religion gefunden zu haben. "Die Kunst zeugte nun für die Religion, wie einst für die Nation"²⁶, und die westdeutsche Kunstgeschichte suchte, was noch wenige Jahre zuvor nicht vorstellbar gewesen wäre, in der 'Ars Sacra' nach europäischer Identität im geschichtlichen Raum. Damit verschob sich zwar die Betrachtungsweise grundlegend, jedoch ohne daß eine Auseinandersetzung mit der im eigenen Fach geleisteten Forschung begonnen hätte.

Die ideologische Vereinnahmung des Frühmittelalters fand zu keiner Zeit, auch nicht während der des NS-Regimes, von allen Fachwissenschaftlern Unterstützung. Es gab Ausnahmen, nicht nur unter Kunsthistorikern, sondern auch in den angrenzenden Fachwissenschaften, die die frühmittelalterliche Geschichte unter einem ideologiefreien Blickwinkel betrachteten. Schon 1958 beschreibt der Sprachwissenschaftler Erich Auerbach die frühmittelalterliche Kulturperiode: "Es ist eine neue Lage, es sind neue Bedürfnisse, die einen neuen Ausdruckswillen schufen. Es handelt sich nicht nur und nicht wesentlich um den Verfall des alten, sondern um einen neuen, sogar um einen bewußt neuen Stil. (...) natürlich ist es wahr, daß das antike Stilgefühl aufhört als ein Ganzes zu wirken, und für geraume Zeit nur noch in seinen einzelnen Teilen fortlebt, wie die Steine eines zerstörten Bauwerks, die zu einem neuen Bau dienen

müssen; aber man muß auch versuchen, den neuen Bau als Neues und Ganzes zu sehen."²⁷ Auch aus der Geschichtsperspektive Walter Benjamins erhalten wir eine Anleitung dazu, alte Mythen und Ideologien zu überwinden. Es ist für das Verständnis der Geschichte demnach wichtig, "in jeder Epoche" zu versuchen, "die Überlieferung von neuem dem Konformismus abzugewinnen, der im Begriff steht, sie zu überwältigen."²⁸

Ich möchte Ihnen den Versuch eines Kunstgelehrten schildern, der bereits im Jahre 1900 öffentlich dafür eintrat, die Kunst, wie Benjamin es formulierte, dem Konformismus in der Geschichte zu entreißen. Seine in der Kunstgeschichte wenig bekannten und unterschätzten Beobachtungen bilden einen interessanten theoretischen Ausgangspunkt, um die Kunst des Frühmittelalters unter neuen Vorzeichen zu diskutieren. Ich komme damit zugleich auf meinen Ausgangspunkt zurück.

Der Wiener Kunsthistoriker Franz Wickhoff (1853-1909) machte 1895 durch seine bis heute berühmte Veröffentlichung über die *Wiener Genesis* auf sich aufmerksam.²⁹ Es war ihm hier gelungen, aus alten Denkprinzipien herauszutreten und wertfreie Beschreibungen für Darstellungsarten zu finden, die andere als 'unklassisch' empfanden und die sie symptomatisch für kulturellen Verfall hielten. So entwickelte er den Begriff der "kontinuierenden" Darstellungsart, der es ermöglicht, eine Bildebene zu definieren, in der verschiedene zeitliche Stadien einer Geschichte nebeneinander gezeigt werden.³⁰ Ähnlich argumentierte er in Bezug auf den Geschichtsverlauf: Er erkannte an, daß parallel gegenläufige und widersprüchliche Tendenzen bei künstlerischen Entwicklungen die Geschichte bestimmen, daß es keine "geraden Linien" gibt, wie die "Schulmeister (...) uns gar zu gerne glauben machen (möchten, S.E.)."³¹ Er lehnte die Ausschließlichkeit ab, mit der die horizontalen Grenzen zwischen den Epochen gezogen wurden. Statt dessen beschrieb er die Differenzen: "Es gab einen Entwicklungsgang in der antiken Kunst der römischen Kaiserzeit, und zwar auch einen aufsteigenden, nicht bloß einen Niedergang wie man allenthalben glauben machen will..."³²

Wickhoffs Frühwerk entstand in Zusammenarbeit mit Wilhelm Ritter von Hartel, der nicht nur als einer

²⁶ H. BELTING, *Die Deutschen und ihre Kunst, ein schwieriges Erbe*, München, 1992, 52.

²⁷ E. AUERBACH, *Literatursprache und Publikum*, Bern, 1958, 67.

²⁸ W. BENJAMIN, Über den Begriff der Geschichte, in: DERS., *Illuminationen*, Frankfurt a.M., 1977, 253.

²⁹ F. WICKHOFF, a.a.O.

³⁰ F. WICKHOFF, *Gesammelte Schriften*, hg. v. M. DVORAK, Bd. 3 (= F. WICKHOFF, *Römische Kunst (Die Wiener Genesis)*), Berlin, 1912-13, 10.

³¹ *Ibm.*, 25.

³² *Ibm.*, 18.

der führenden Altphilologen im damaligen Wien galt, sondern der sich auch als besonnener Verwaltungsfachmann hervorgetan hatte.³³ Als Sprachwissenschaftler besorgte er die kritische Textausgabe der *Wiener Genesis*, als Ministerialrat für Universitäten, liberaler Kultur- und Bildungspolitiker, setzte er sich für die moderne Kunst ein. Hartel war eine zentrale Figur im Streit um die Fakultätsbilder Gustav Klimts an der Wiener Universität, der 1900 die Wiener skandalisierte.³⁴ Franz Wickhoff spielte ebenfalls eine Hauptrolle bei den Auseinandersetzungen, da er sich gegen einen großen Teil der Professorenschaft aktiv auf die Seite der Klimtverteidiger stellte. Der Konflikt entzündete sich an der Darstellung von Klimts “Philosophie”, die er nicht, wie die meisten Mitglieder des Lehrkörpers gehofft hatten, als “Allegorie, sondern als Symbol einer determinierten Menschheit” zeigte.³⁵ Die aufschlußreichen Worte Wickhoffs fielen am 9. Mai 1900. Vor der Philosophischen Gesellschaft der Universität fragte er provokativ: “Was ist häßlich?”, um seinen Gegnern die Engstirnigkeit an Hand ihrer ästhetischen Kategorien vorzuhalten.³⁶ Er entwarf hier eine Argumentation, die weit über die der *Wiener Genesis* hinausgeht, alte ästhetische Normen nicht nur herausforderte, sondern letztlich revolutionierte.

Der Vorwurf der Gegner Klimts, zu dessen Sprachrohr sich der Philosophieprofessor Friedrich Jodl machte, galt, nach dem anfänglichen Unbehagen gegenüber der Darstellungsart der “Philosophie”, nun der künstlerischen Qualität des Bildes³⁷ – einem bis heute verbreiteten Vorurteil, um Kunst zu diffamieren. Durch die Abwertung der Fähigkeiten Klimts versuchte er die Ausführung des Auftrags für die Deckengestaltung der Universitätsaula doch noch zu unterbinden. An dieser Stelle schritt Wickhoff mit seinem Vortrag ein.

Der zentrale Gedanke seiner Ausführungen gründete darauf, daß ästhetische Maßstäbe ursprünglich auf sexueller Orientierung beruhen. Die Kategorien von ‘schön’ und ‘häßlich’ seien im Grunde aus “Empfindungskomplexen” bei der Gattenwahl entstanden, wären also vom Instinkt dominiert. Die akademisch-reflektierende Kunstbetrachtung habe im Laufe der Zeit aber zu einer Entfremdung geführt, so daß der spontan-intuitive Zugang verschüttet sei.

Klimts Kunst erfordere jedoch gerade dieses “Nachempfinden” von Instinkthaftem.³⁸

Wickhoffs Verteidigungsrede fällt in das selbe Jahr wie die erste Veröffentlichung Sigmund Freuds: Das Manuskript seiner *Traumdeutung* wurde 1899 abgeschlossen, die letzten Seiten gingen Anfang September in die Druckerei.³⁹ Ob Wickhoff zu diesem Zeitpunkt die Schrift Freuds bereits gelesen hatte, ist noch nicht erschlossen. Doch seine Haltung in dem Universitätsdisput legt eine Auseinandersetzung mit dessen Gedanken nahe.⁴⁰ Vielleicht ließ sich Einiges durch seinen früheren Koautor in Erfahrung bringen, denn es war Hartel, der sich für die Ernennung Freuds zum Professor einsetzte. Erst durch ihn war es Freud 1902 gelungen, öffentliche Reputation zu erlangen, auf die er bereits seit vier Jahren gehofft hatte.⁴¹

Während Wickhoff 1895 in der *Wiener Genesis* noch in der Position des beobachtend-reflektierenden Gelehrten verharrte, griff er in seinem aktuellen Beitrag weit voraus, indem er der Kunst als Ausdruck des Unbewußten und Triebhaften Anerkennung und sogar Vorrang gewährte. In demselben Maß wie Freud zum erstenmal bei seiner Selbstanalyse Träume als ernstzunehmende Quellen wissenschaftlicher Untersuchung ansah, erweiterte Wickhoff das Kunstverständnis um den Anteil, der zuvor, wie die Traumwelt, unbequem und beängstigend erschien, der Mißfallen hervorrief und große Ablehnung erzeugte.

Mit Hilfe der Kategorien von ‘schön’ und ‘häßlich’ ließ sich nach Wickhoff also nicht die Kunst von Klimt noch die jeder anderen Epoche qualifizieren. Sie stellen subjektive Äußerungen dar, die wie später sein berühmterer Fachkollege Alois Riegl bemerkte, höchstens auf den Geschmack des Betrachters weisen, denn: “Dieser Geschmack verlangt vom Kunstwerk Schönheit und Lebendigkeit...”⁴²

Der Aufwertung frühmittelalterlicher Kunst, die sich Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts in der deutschsprachigen Kunstgeschichtsschreibung abzeichnete, fügten die Wiener Kunsthistoriker Franz Wickhoff und Alois Riegl das erforderliche geschichtsphilosophische Fundament hinzu. Obgleich sie sich in ihren Veröffentlichungen auf die spätantike Kunst beschränkten und dadurch, wie vorangegangene Generationen von Kunstgelehrten, eine hierarchische

³³ C.E. SCHORSKE, *Wien, Geist und Gesellschaft im Fin de Siècle*, München, 1994, 223.

³⁴ *Ibm.*, 219.

³⁵ E. LACHNIT, *Kunstgeschichte und zeitgenössische Kunst. Das wissenschaftliche Verhältnis zum lebendigen Forschungsgegenstand am Beispiel der älteren Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte*, Phil. Diss. Masch. Schr., Wien, 1984, 66.

³⁶ *Ibm.*, 71.

³⁷ *Ibm.*, 68.

³⁸ *Ibm.*, 71-72.

³⁹ S. FREUD, *Die Traumdeutung*, Wien, 1900; C.E. SCHORSKE, a.a.O., 183.

⁴⁰ E. LACHNIT, a.a.O., 72.

⁴¹ C.E. SCHORSKE, a.a.O., 230-231.

⁴² A. RIEGL, *Die spätromische Kunstindustrie...*, a.a.O., Darmstadt 1992, 10-11.

Ordnung von Kunst tradierten, die an die historisch-politische Geschichtsschreibung anknüpfte, setzten sie einen Prozeß in Gang, der die wertfreie Betrachtung der Epoche insgesamt erst ermöglichte. Die bis dahin unüberwindlich erscheinende Vorstellung von Verfall und Aufschwung in der Geschichte war erschüttert, so daß Raum für eine stärkere Differenzierung entstand. Differenzierung ist gleichzeitig das Kennzeichen der beginnenden Moderne. Der Zweifel, das Leiden, die Endlichkeit der Menschheit, die Erkenntnis, daß es ein unbewußtes, triebhaftes, irrationales und beängstigendes Leben, neben dem

bewußten und einschätzbaren gibt, auch der Glaube an den Mythos, all das ist atmosphärischer Bestandteil des Wiener Fin de Siècle.

Vor diesem Hintergrund noch einmal nach der Kunst des Frühmittelalters zu fragen und ohne Rücksicht auf Gattungsunterschiede und eigene ästhetische Wert- und Vorurteile den gesamten Denkmälerschatz zu betrachten, das scheint ein sehr vielversprechendes Unternehmen. Sich der frühmittelalterlichen Kunst ohne die Last der alten Märchen und Mythen anzunehmen, wird sich als ein zukunftsweisendes Projekt herausstellen.

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Some technological aspects of fine metalworking in Gnezdovo: an analysis of the hoards from the Upper Dnieper region

The Gnezdovo settlements and cemeteries are located along the Upper Dnieper, in the region of Smolensk and date from the end of the 9th to the beginning of the 11th century. It has been suggested that Gnezdovo is the largest cemetery of medieval Europe, with 4000 burial mounds.

The large collection of artefacts found during the excavations since 1874 has become an important element in the discussions concerning the social and ethnic structure of this site and the character of this early urban centre, where intensive contacts between Rus' and Scandinavia, especially Sweden, developed in the Viking Age.

It is now generally agreed that Gnezdovo was linked with the guard of the Grand Prince of Kiev who exacted tribute in Upper Dnieper region. It would, however, be wrong to see the role of Gnezdovo in the history of Old Rus' exclusively in terms of the warriors' activities of the guard. Excavations at the settlement offer direct evidence for the production and working of iron, bone, pottery, jewellery and other goods. There is also some evidence for agricultural and long-distance trade activity (Avdusin 1969).

Gnezdovo has yielded splendid hoards of silver jewellery and coins. The first and the largest deposit was found accidentally in 1867; the last in 1993 in the settlement excavations. The total number of Gnezdovo hoards is 7. Two of them, found during excavations in the settlement in 1973 and 1975, contain only coins (Arabic). Five deposits consist not only of minted silver but include considerable collections of jewellery of splendid quality, amongst them 100 complete objects with filigree and granulation. According to the Islamic, West-European and Indian coins, the Gnezdovo hoards containing filigree and granulation work can be dated to the second half of the 10th century.

We will focus on the extensive body of filigree and granulation jewellery from the Upper Dnieper region. It should be noted the main part of it belongs to the female ornaments. There are mostly temple-rings and different kinds of pendants (round, lunula-shaped and so-called 'kaptorga' items, beads and buttons).

Temple rings are the most characteristic item of Slav women's jewellery of the Middle Ages. In the Gnezdovo hoards, there are six objects with filigree and granulation. They are of the so-called 'Volhynian type', characterised by the elongated beads fixed in the lower part of the arch (Fig. 1). XRF and metallographic analyses established the high quality of the silver.

It is not necessary to go into a detailed description of the filigree and granulation techniques here. These have been examined and described by many researchers (Duczko 1985; Ogden 1994). Nevertheless, it should be noted every object is built up of 13 elements. Ten different manufacturing operations were required to prepare and assemble all components and details of the temple ring (drawing, stamping, working, soldering and others).

Two types of ornamental wire can be distinguished on the objects: plain ones with a round section and twisted ones with a round section. There are more than 2100 grains with an average size of 0.1 mm, but some are larger (0.8-2 mm).

The domed upper plates for the temple rings were produced by placing and hammering the patrix into the sheet of silver substrate.

Completely fitted patrices for the same temple rings were found in the chamber grave of the goldsmith from Peresopnica in Volhynia (Ukraine) (Korzuchina 1946). All the patrices are plane on one side (Fig. 1).

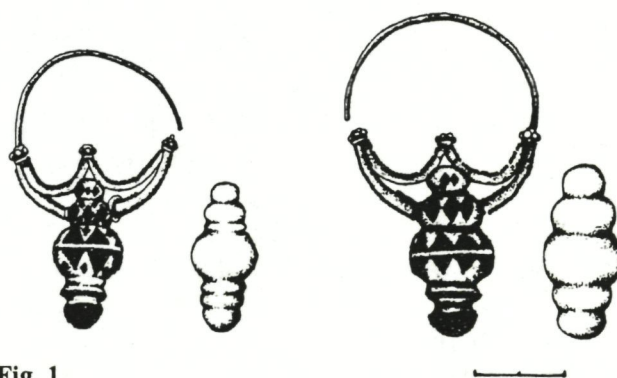
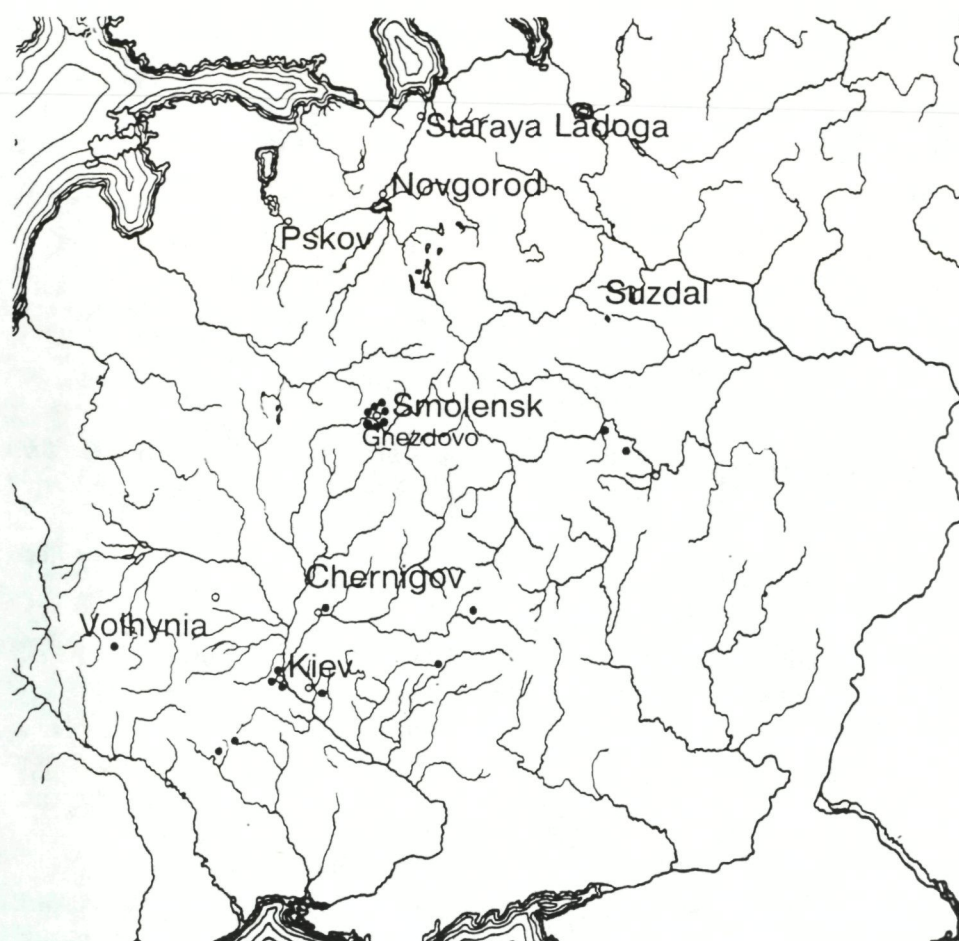


Fig. 1.



The distribution of the Russian Hoards dated to the 2nd half of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century.

Wires and grains were bonded to the substrate by soldering. Examination of the microstructure shows the specially annealed layer of metal between the grain and the substrate. It means the complete diffusion of applied solder when amalgam soldering was used. The metallic solder consists of gold, silver and mercury. The amalgam soldering process is very close to mercury gilding. It explains the very special gold-like colour of the temple ring surface.

These temple rings are very seldom encountered. There are 8 examples in the hoards from Gushchino near Chernigov (Korzukhina 1954) and Borshcevska (Volhynia), and 4 unprovenanced objects in museum collections. Some examples are known from outside Old Rus', among them the temple rings from Poland (Lisówek, Rzepin) and from Sweden (Torsta, Hälsingland; Rågåkra and Sandes, Gotland) (Duczko 1972).

The shape and the ornamentation of the Volhynian temple rings suggest that they originated in Great Moravia. To the list should be added four granulated temple rings belonging to different types of Late Moravian ornaments found during the excavations in the Gnezdovo settlement. The Volhynian type of decoration has the distinctive local features. The marked concentration of the ornaments and the stamps found

allow us to suggest the temple rings to be of local Volhynian origins.

The temple rings of this type are dated to the second half of the 10th or the beginning of the 11th century. The grave from Peresopnica can be dated to the beginning of the 11th century.

Lunula pendants were found in 4 hoards from Gnezdovo. It is the most representative collection of Russian lunulae forms with 19 examples from hoards and 4 objects from the graves and the settlement.

All pendants consist of a crescent-shaped piece of sheet metal with a suspension loop formed of a folded strip (Fig. 2-4). The margins of the tube are decorated with a thick wire extending from the front to the reverse. This suggests that the wires act as reinforcements for the very thin substrate of the pendant (Duczko 1985). The bordering decoration consists of twisted a run-section wire. The field of decoration is covered with angular lines, lozenges or triangles in granulation. There are more than 2200 granules on the surface of the biggest pendants. The bosses of overlapping sheet metal are frequently applied in the centre, under the suspension loop and one in each corner. The tops of the bosses are often covered with wire and granules. The grave from Peresopnica

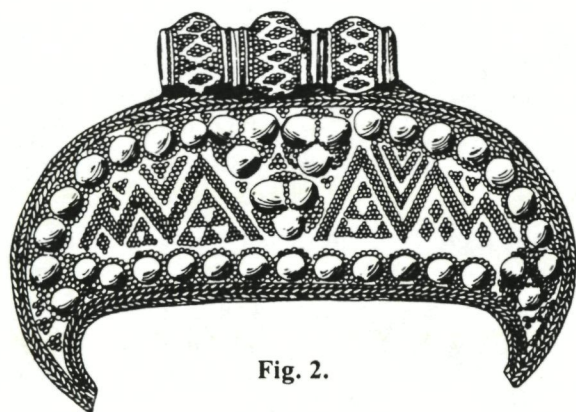


Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

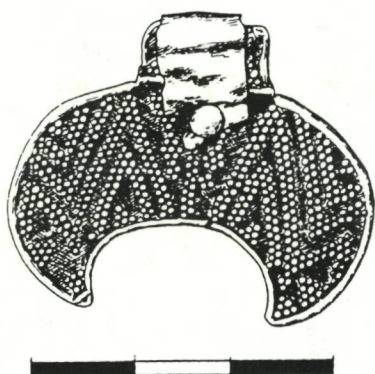
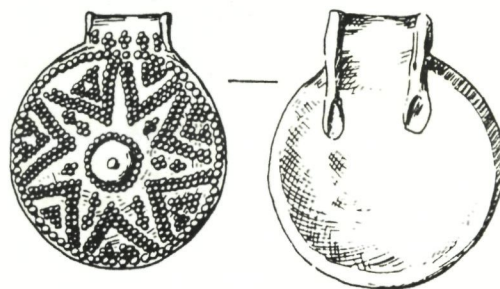


Fig. 5.



mentioned earlier contained the special patric for three combined bosses which frequently appear on the surface of lunula pendants (fig. 2).

XRF and metalgraphical examinations confirm the high quality of silver and the amalgam soldering. There is a distinctive zone of surface oxidation which can be formed following a heating to 600-700° C. This shows that the soldering was carried out under a high temperature.

The total number of the granulated lunula pendants in Russia is 40. The second concentration of lunula pendants is that of pendants from Polish hoards (61 examples). They mostly consist of hack silver but almost all Polish pendants are identical to Russian (Kiersnowscy 1959; Slaski & Tabaczynski 1959). Both groups are from the second half of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century. We may assume a local origin for the Polish and for the Russian finds. Volhynia has been considered as a centre of their manufacture (Korzuchina 1954). A total of 34 objects found in Scandinavia have been identified as Slavonic (Duczko 1985).

The manufacturing technique and the ornamentation of the next group of Slavonic pendants are very similar to those used for the lunula pendants. There are 6 **circular-convex** pendants from Gnezdovo hoards (fig. 5). They were constructed with two round-shaped pieces of sheet silver. One of these was flat, the other domed with a central boss made by the

impression of a special stamp. Outside Gnezdovo, convex pendants are very rare: two are known from northwestern Russian hoards and one from a grave (Vladimirskije kurgany, East-Northern Russia) dated to the 11th century. There are a few examples from Poland and Sweden. The most recent objects come from a hoard dated to the 12th century (Allmänninge, Gästrikland, Sweden).

One of the round pendants from the Gnezdovo hoards was made in simpler way using only a plane piece of sheet metal. Similar objects were found in the Gnezdovo cemetery (fig. 6). All round pendants with geometrical ornamentation doubtlessly belong to the class of Slavonic jewellery. It has been suggested that the temple ring with an identical ornamentation pattern from Pannonia (the 7th century) can be considered as a prototype (Duczko 1972). The common technological style typical for the Volhynian temple rings, lunulae, and convex and flat round pendants from the Gnezdovo hoards allow us to link the last ones with Volhynia.

The largest Gnezdovo hoard (1867) contained the unique type of ornament belonging to the '**kaptorga**' pendants. It is a trapeze-shaped box made of silver sheet with horizontal tubes in the upper and lower parts. Three animal heads embossed by pressing are set on the front surface. The pendant is covered with granulation triangles and made in an ornamental style characteristic for Volhynia (fig. 9). There are no

direct analogies for the Gnezdovo 'kaptorga'. A group of similar objects occurs in finds from Poland, Moravia, Southern Sweden, Gotland, the Baltic States and Volga Bulgaria. The oldest hoard containing 'kaptorga' is dated to the first half of the 10th century, the youngest to the middle of the 11th century.

A group of buttons consists of 8 objects. All of them have been constructed from two hemispherical embossed pieces with suspension holes. A small granulated boss and suspension loop are soldered to the margins of the holes. There are 6 examples decorated only with simple chains of granules (fig. 7); 2 examples are decorated with triangles of different sizes and with twisted wire soldered to the upper piece of the button (fig. 8).

Embossed granulated buttons occur in Moravia in the 9th-10th centuries. There are no direct analogies to the specimen from the Gnezdovo hoards. The closest parallels to the Gnezdovo buttons come from the Kopievski hoard (2nd half of the 10th century) near Kiev and the Denis hoard near Poltava (beginning of the 11th century).

Silver beads are the most frequent and varied group of ornaments. The Gnezdovo hoards have yielded 60 objects of this group. Some beads with filigree and granulation came from the excavations of the settlement and graves (5 objects).

Only one example belongs to the open-worked decorations. It was made of wire loops soldered together. The suspension holes are decorated with rings of plain, round section wires. Several big granules on the rings were set on intersections of the loops (fig. 17).

Open-worked beads are quite rare. Apart from Gnezdovo, they were found twice in Russian hoards dated to the first half of the 11th century. They occur more frequently as a component of the temple rings of western Slavonic types (fig. 18) in the hoards from Poland and Southern Sweden (Hårdh 1976).

The small group of bow-shaped beads consists of 3 objects. They are built of a small tube (with central bead), three curved, two-parts arms and two framing plaques and wire rings (fig. 16) The arms and central bead have a granulated surface.

Bow-shaped beads are quite rare. Apart from the specimens from Gnezdovo, 25 complete items and 12 different fragments are known. Most of them are dated to the second part of the 10th and the first half of the 11th century. They come from Gotlandic, central Swedish, Polish and Austro-Hungarian hoards and from Russian hoards and graves (Duczko 1980-82).

The discovery of a patirix for the production of arms for bow-shaped beads in the grave from Pere-sopnitca and their frequent occurrence in Volhynia and the Kiev region show that this was a central production area (Korzuchina G. 1946).

There are 4 specimens with an oval shape separated by granulation lines from a field with triangles or angular rows. Similar beads are found in the hoards from Poland (Slaski 1959) and Gotland (Duczko 1972) and dated to the same period of time as objects from the Gnezdovo.

Spool-shaped and embossed beads are represented by 2 examples. They are characteristic of Slavonic jewellery and occur in finds from Bohemia, Pomerania, Schleswig and Sweden (24 examples) (Duczko 1985).

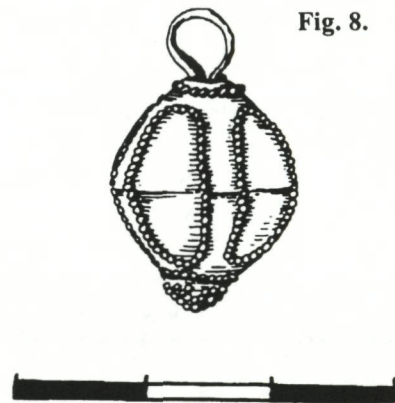
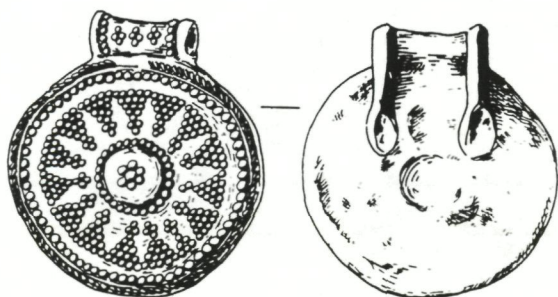
Fig. 6.



Fig. 7.



Fig. 8.



Spherical beads (31 examples) were constructed of two embossed pieces of sheet metal. Decorations are absent; the suspension holes are covered with a round flat wire. The same shape (more or less spherical) is characteristic of the large group of beads with different ornamental patterns (21 examples). Geometrical patterns (triangles and lozenges) decorated 13 objects. The reference material is provided by hoards from Poland and Gotland (Slaski 1959; Duczko 1972). One sample covered with rows of granules set in rings has analogies in Poland (Slaski 1959) and Gotland (Duczko 1972). The same ornamental detail occurs also on the beads of the temple rings and the buttons from Moravia. It also appeared on the Volynian temple rings (fig. 1).

There are beads with S-spiral filigree and granulation (7 samples). According to W. Duczko (1985), this type of beads has frequently been recovered in the hoards and graves of the Nordic countries, the Baltic states and Russia. They are linked with Scandinavian jewellery and date from the Middle Viking period.

The Scandinavian cultural area seems to be represented in the Gnezdovo hoards by the great variety of jewellery including 16 pendants with filigree and granulation. There are mostly so called '**disc-shaped pendants**' of similar construction. Their suspension loops are formed with a flap of the substrate metal which has been folded over and was soldered to the back of the pendants. The main decorative motive is volutes (fig. 10-13). These are characteristic features of the Nordic pendants of the Viking period (Duczko 1985). There are many parallels in the Swedish, Danish and Polish find material (Hårdh 1976),



Fig. 9.

but the best parallels come from the graves from Gnezdovo, Vladimir, Jaroslavl, (Timerevo), Chernigov (Shestovica).

Two ornaments belong to the rare type of pendants with a central boss and whorl ornament. The surface of the objects is divided into 10 fields by 10 curved wires (fig. 14). The fields contain rings with granules. The central boss is covered with granules and surrounded by wire. On the reverse there is a

Fig. 10.



Fig. 11.

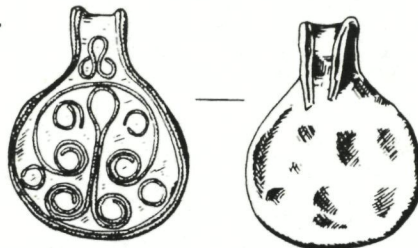


Fig. 12.



Fig. 13.



Fig. 14.



Fig. 15.



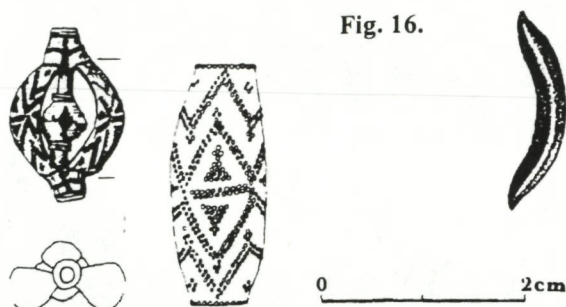


Fig. 16.



Fig. 17.

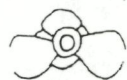


Fig. 20.



0 1 2 cm

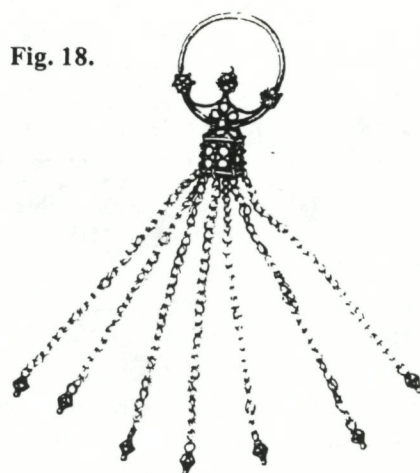


Fig. 18.

0 3 cm

narrow piece of strip for suspension. There are 11 examples of disc-shaped pendants known from Sweden (hoards and graves), Denmark and East Prussia (Duczko 1985).

Two circular pendants from the Big Hoard of Gnezdovo are quite unique. The first has a construction which is typical for Scandinavian jewellery, a very special ornament with western affinities and a Gotlandic stepped motif (fig. 13). It occurs on the gold bracteates (Ringdome, Gotland) and on the silver circular pendant found in the famous woman burial at Aska (Östergötland, Sweden).

The second pendant is an obvious hybrid of Scandinavian and Slavonic art (fig. 15). It has the same construction as the Llanelli and convex pendants. The geometrical granulation on the suspension loop with straight double lines and triangles and lozenges of granules is characteristic for the Russian style. However, the fabrication technique is characteristic of Scandinavian art: it consists of pressing the upper sheet of metal in the die to form the main elements of the relief (a two-headed bird) which can be seen on the reverse. The shape and style of the bird and irregular granulation have many parallels in Scandinavian jewellery.

All the above-mentioned circular pendants are dated to the second half of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century.

The material discussed in the present paper belongs to different manufacturing traditions. The

larger part of the jewellery has parallels in the Nordic and Slavonic materials.

W. Duczko thinks that the Slavonic filigree work from Eastern Europe can be divided into three geographical groups: Moravia-Bohemia, Volynien-Kiev and Poland-Elceland (Duczko 1985). The material from Gnezdovo includes a few items of jewellery of the first groups but these occur mainly in the settlement. The largest part of the ornaments belongs to the Volhynian-Kiev group. The manufacture of the light filigree decorations in Volhynia is well-documented by their being markedly concentrated in this region and in the famous grave material from Peresopnitca.

It is clear that every group reflects oriental and Byzantine influences. The art of filigree and granulation had not been adopted directly from Byzantium. The origin of Moravian jewellery was connected with the Avars, who were the mediators between the Byzantium and Slavonic world (Duczko 1983). The appearance of Volhynian local group is connected with Moravian influences but reveals distinctive features.

Russian hoards with Volhynian jewellery were identified as a special chronological group by G.F. Korzuchina (map). The group consists of expensive women's ornaments which are stylistically unified. The owners belong to the upper strata of the Old Rus' society. The same ornaments are also present in the rich graves in Kiev, Chernigov and Gnezdovo, connected with the guard of the Grand Prince. It is difficult and even impossible to determine whether a

hoard was accumulated by trading or raiding, or is constituted by payments to a retainer. Some hoards represent the true jewellery of a family. More often, however, coins and ornaments were exchanged by traders. A very large part of the complete ornaments had the double function of being both a means of payment and jewellery. Some hoards contain the typical tools of the merchants' trade: scales and weights.

The hoards from Gnezdovo also contain a large proportion of Scandinavian filigree work brought to Gnezdovo by Scandinavians. Apart from a great variety of pendants, we should mention 3 examples of the round filigree brooches found in the graves and at the settlement (fig. 20)

There are no striking differences between Slavonic and Nordic manufacturing traditions. The differences are mainly of a stylistic nature. Sometimes, the styles and decorations have been mixed into one single pattern.

The most complex question concerns the identification of the ethnic background of the craftsmen who produced all these objects. However, the detailed study of the differences between these manufacturing traditions can lead us to the point where we will be able to distinguish the borderlines between the separate ethnic groups.

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Jewellery, art and symbolism in Medieval Irish society

Abstract

The aesthetics of art and beauty, concepts of wealth and status, courtly love and the symbolism of religious beliefs can be approached through the study of Medieval jewellery and society in Ireland. The organisation of Anglo-Norman and Gaelic societies within a culturally divided island influenced the use, form and decoration of such items as ring brooches, finger rings, girdles and paternoster beads etc. Archaeological, historical and art historical studies of these items illustrate how some social groups deliberately portrayed themselves as part of a wider European culture. The following paper is based on a chapter from a forthcoming publication on Medieval ring brooches in Ireland (Deevy forthcoming).

Introduction

By the twelfth century, Ireland had already been moving towards the feudal socio-economic system common throughout western Europe, but this process was accelerated with the arrival of the Anglo-Normans after 1169 AD (O'Brien 1994). A manorial agricultural economy was established in the conquered areas, in which all land was owned by the lord but held for him by a hierarchy of nobles and peasants in return for dues in the form of money, goods, services and allegiance. Associated with European feudalism was chivalry, a series of ethical ideals representing Christian and military concepts of morality (Saul 1992, 6-7). This paper explores what insights the study of jewellery, in particular ring brooches, can contribute to our understanding of medieval society in Ireland.

Ring brooches were one of the most important items of medieval jewellery, worn by men and women across Europe, both as decorative ornaments and practical clothes fasteners. They can date from the late twelfth to the sixteenth centuries, although they were most popular in the thirteenth century. A ring

brooch essentially consists of an open metal frame and a short pin, made of either gold or silver or of a copper alloy or lead alloy. They can be quite plain or simply decorated with engraved motifs such as the continuous chevrons and rocked tracer ornament on a ring brooch from Knowth, Co. Meath (Fig. 1: 1). They can also be highly decorated with gemstones set in collets as on the ring brooch from Marlborough Street, Dublin (Fig. 1: 2).

The distribution of ring brooches in Ireland shows a striking concentration in the areas controlled by the Anglo-Normans from the late twelfth to the fourteenth centuries, being particularly common in the north-east, east and south of the island (Fig. 2). The provenances of the majority of ring brooches also emphasize Anglo-Norman associations with most examples found in towns, rural fortifications, manorial settlements and the ecclesiastical foundations of the new religious orders. A few ring brooch finds from crannógs (artificial island settlements) may indicate that the Gaelic Irish had also adopted this form of jewellery.

A valuable source of information about medieval jewellery and clothing are contemporary depictions which survive in a variety of forms, including stone and brass effigies, incised grave slabs, architectural stone sculpture, wooden sculpture, decorated pottery, illustrated manuscripts, frescos, oil paintings and stained glass. These serve as a window in time through which many aspects of medieval life and technology can be studied (Unger 1991). The most important form of depictions surviving from medieval Ireland are stone effigies. Their value has already been shown in the study of the development of medieval clothes and armour (Dunlevy 1989; Hunt 1974). As far as I am aware there appear to be no surviving Irish medieval manuscripts with actual depictions of ring brooches. Such manuscripts from other European countries however have proved to be one of the most interesting sources of details especially for some of the 'lower' classes of medieval society. In particular, medieval Psalters and Books of Hours from Britain, France, Germany and the Low Countries typically

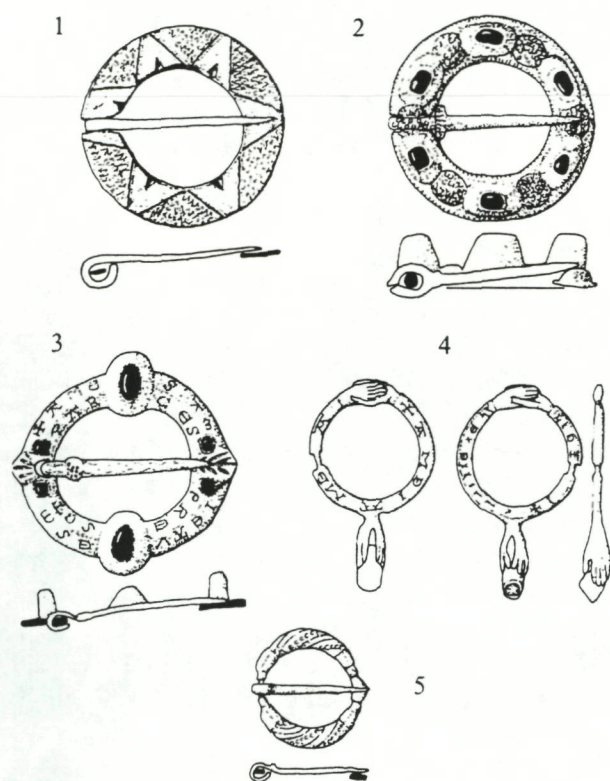


Fig. 1. - Examples of Irish Medieval ring brooches.

1: Copper alloy brooch from Knowth, Co. Meath, 2: Gold brooch with gems from Marlborough Street, Dublin, 3: Gold brooch with gems and inscription from Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, 4: Gold brooch with inscription and projecting hands clasping collet, Trim, Co. Meath, 5: Silver brooch with stylised sleeves and joined hands, unprovenanced.

contain as incidental illustrated detail, a wealth of information on contemporary crafts, costume and every day activities.

Ring brooches are inextricably linked to the style of contemporary medieval dress as they primarily functioned as clothes fasteners. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries gowns worn by both men and women often had a slit at the neck enabling them to be pulled on over the head. The ring brooch served the practical function of closing this slit as illustrated for example by sculpted heads on the porch of St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny city. The pin was thrust through the edges of the vertical split at the neck which first had to be pulled slightly through the frame so that the pin could be manoeuvred through them. The result is that the pin is simply held in place against the opposite side of the frame by the drape of the fabric. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries both men's and women's clothing became tighter and were usually fastened with buttons and laces. While the ring brooch was occasionally still worn with the looser style of dress, it was now more often seen fastening a cloak over the breast eg: 'Christ showing the five wounds' on a tomb chest in Gowran Co. Kil-

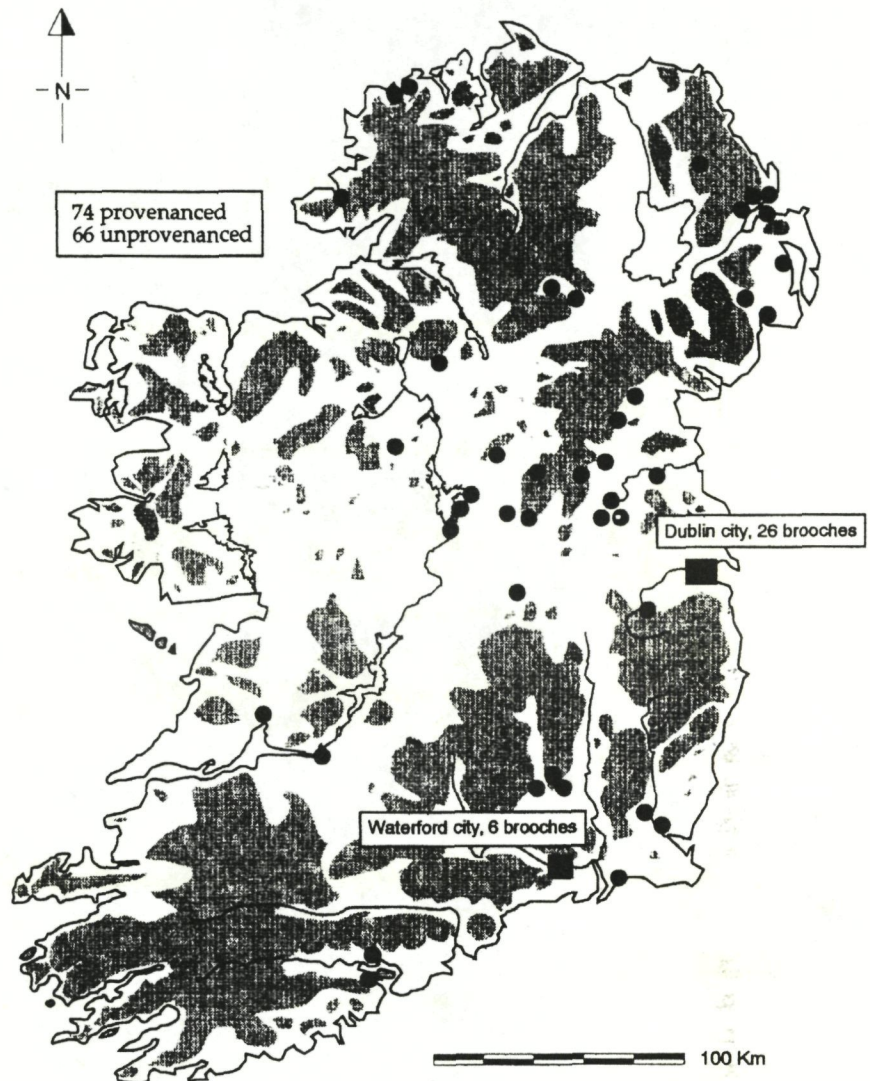
kenny. The ring brooch also performed additional practical tasks such as attaching items like purses, paternoster beads and aprons to the dress.

Ring brooches and jewellery as assets

'In an age without banks', collections of gold and silver coins, plate and jewellery 'represented bullion, and were assets easily realised in times of financial difficulty' (Campbell 1991, 108). Such collections are represented by British, German, French and Danish medieval coin hoards which have also contained jewellery. Many coin hoards were probably deposited for safety during political unrest or from fear in economic crises. A number of hoards have been associated with the Scottish Wars of Independence (Callendar 1924, 163). Two English fifteenth-century hoards from Fishpool, Nottinghamshire and the Thames river, London, may have been associated with the Wars of the Roses (Cherry 1973, 308; Hinton 1993, 328; Hinton 1982, 21). Religious persecution may also have resulted in a number of hastily deposited hoards not being retrieved. For example two fourteenth-century hoards, one from Colmar, France and another from Munster, Germany have been dated to periods when major Jewish pogroms occurred in those towns (Reynolds Brown 1992, 414). However hoards were probably also buried for safekeeping as savings in times of peace (Thompson 1956, xvi).

Many medieval Irish documentary references attest to the collection of large quantities of valuables including jewellery and clothing by the wealthy and of the need to safeguard them. In 1295, Silvester le Ercedekne accused Hugh Purcel, sheriff of Tipperary of breaking into his castle (of Dounhochil) and stealing from chests and coffer a large quantity of valuables including money, clothes, armour, plate, gold rings, precious stones, brooches, girdles woven with silk and other jewels (Mills 1905, 6). In the same year in County Waterford, Leopardus de Mareys accused two men of breaking into his house and taking from a chest money, jewels, gold, silver, bonds and cloth (Mills 1905, 67). In 1297 in Waterford Milanus Petri accused four men of having broken into the house of his lord, the parson of the church of Dungaruan, of having broken open a chest and of stealing money, brooches, rings, spoons, other jewels and bonds (Mills 1905, 128). In Dublin in 1306 Alex. de Kexeby accused his serving man Hugh de Stafford of having broken into his coffer and stealing brooches, rings and money (Mills 1914, 498). Such references show that wealthy people accumulated their own stocks of precious metal and gemstones as well as jewellery, coins and cloth. While precious metals and stones

Fig. 2. - *Distribution of medieval ring brooches in Ireland.*



were kept as a reserve of valuables they were also collected in order to be converted into jewellery at a later date. When commissioning jewels, patrons were often expected to supply goldsmiths with gold, silver and gems, the raw materials of their trade (Campbell 1991, 117; Lightbown 1992, 33).

Jewellery was also pledged as security to obtain money advances. An inventory of the belongings of Ellen Stiward made in 1457 shows that she had 'a set of beads of one Agnes Broun with five rings and 1 brooch' pledged for 5s (Berry 1898, 2). An inventory of the goods of Hugh Galliane, citizen of Dublin made in 1474, show that he had one jewel belonging to the church of St. Patrick pledged with him for 10s (Berry 1898, 85). In 1474 Arlandton Ussher, a merchant in Dublin, had one gold ring as security for a loan of 3s 4d made to John Roche (Berry 1898, 92). In Dublin in 1299 Sibilla de Fulbourne was forced to take legal action in an attempt to retrieve her jewellery in the form of a girdle and ten gold rings which she had pledged as security for a loan of 40s and had since repaid (Mills 1905, 220).

The role of jewellery and clothing in medieval economics might also be reflected in some of the varied motives inspiring contemporary sumptuary laws. Frances Elizabeth Baldwin has suggested that on the one hand these laws endeavoured 'to encourage home industries and to discourage the buying of foreign goods', but they were also an 'attempt on the part of the sovereign to induce his people to save their money so that they might be able to help him out financially in times of need' (Baldwin 1926, 10).

Ring brooches, jewellery and social ostentation

'In a courtly world it was important to be seen to be richly accoutred' (Hinton 1993, 328). The following comments of Henry VI's son's tutor Sir John Fortescue in the fifteenth century would indicate that lavish display was not just important but was an 'essential attribute of kingship' (Scarisbrick 1994, 3):

'It shall need be that the King have such treasure as he may buy him rich clothes, rich stones, and



Fig. 3. - *Sculpted head on the porch of St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny.* (Photo M.B. Deevy).

other jewels and ornaments convenient to his state royal. For if a King did not do so, he lived then not like his estate, but rather in misery and more in subjection than doth a private person.'

A perceived necessity for such ostentatious extravagance might explain successive generations of the English aristocracy's often huge expenditure on jewels. David Hinton cites a number of examples to illustrate this; in 1355, the Black Prince incurred a debt for jewels to a single merchant for £1,459 15s. 8d., while between 1351 and 1355 he spent £1,575 5s 5d. on building Kennington Palace. Similarly in 1501 Henry VII paid £14,000 to French jewellers when his heir's marriage was to be celebrated, in comparison he spent £20,000 between 1502 and 1509 on his chapel at Westminster Abbey (Hinton 1993, 327). The aristocracy were not the only consumers who used clothing and jewellery, to proclaim rank and wealth (Lightbown 1992, 79). Clothing was such 'an important expression of social rank' in the middle ages (Dyer 1989, 88), that it constituted 'a way of ordering human relations' (Hughes 1983, 88).

In the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a series of sumptuary laws were enacted throughout Europe which formally restricted the wearing of clothing and jewellery by law. In feudal Europe this legislation attempted to preserve the hierarchy of society by preventing members of the lower orders from dressing above their station. It was desired that any stranger should be able to tell by merely looking at one's dress to what rank in society one belonged (Baldwin 1926, 10). Such laws were often specifically aimed at the increasingly wealthy urban merchants. With their greater spending power wealthy bourgeoisie occasionally 'behaved like aristocratic consumers' in displaying and storing their wealth by buying plate and jewels (Dyer 1989, 205-207). For example the English sumptuary legislation of 1363 decreed that craftsmen and yeomen 'were forbidden to wear precious stones, cloth of silver, silk, girdles, knives, buttons, rings, brooches, chains etc of gold or silver...' (Baldwin 1926, 46-48). David Hinton suggests that these attempts to restrict the lesser knights and the bourgeoisie might also reflect the insecurity of the aristocracy which was not always certain of its own tenure (1982, 21). On the contrary many Italian sumptuary laws have 'an anti-aristocratic flavour' and were used to promote 'republican virtue' (Hughes 1983, 74). While it is unclear how successful either of these attempts were, they illustrate medieval society's perception of the use of jewellery and clothing 'as a social mechanism for maintaining rank' (Hinton 1993, 328).

Those who had aspirations towards nobility, and could afford to, often imitated expensive jewellery with 'gold-coloured' copper alloys and glass stones. In the Irish corpus there are a number of copper alloy ring brooches which are identical in design to Irish gold and silver ring brooches. These may have been produced to imitate expensive jewellery for bourgeoisie consumers who could not quite afford precious metal or were forbidden from wearing it by law.

A thirteenth century French poem the *Dit du Mercier* illustrates how the use of ring brooches, in the form of cheap imitations 'had reached a class that could not afford to have them of gold' (Evans 1952, 17). The poem is written as 'the sales-talk of a wandering pedlar' who describes the goods he carries in his basket (Lightbown 1992, 53):

*'J'ai fermaillez d'archal dorez
Et de laitton sorgentez
Et tant les aim cux de laitton
Sovent por argent le met on'.*

Which translates essentially as 'I have little brooches of gilt brass, and of silvered latten, and so fond are folk of latten, that often it is valued as silver' (Lightbown 1992, 53). A number of illustrated manuscripts include depictions of craftworker's apprentices wear-

ing ring brooches such as that of a young blacksmith in the English Egerton manuscript (Unger pl. 40). Similarly stone sculptures such as those from the Maison de Musee, Rheims, France depict young musicians wearing ring brooches to fasten the slit in the neck of their garments. Such examples from contemporary literature and art emphasise that ring brooches were indeed worn by all levels of society.

Other copper alloy brooches appear to be deliberately simplified versions rather than imitations of gold and silver brooches. It may be that such brooches represent the taste of a more conservative element in society, who disapproved of extravagance in jewellery and dress, 'encouraged by medieval religious sentiment' which condemned vanity and ostentation, particularly in women (Lightbown 1992, 79). Indeed many sumptuary laws were probably partly motivated by 'sheer conservatism' and the belief 'that luxury and extravagance were in themselves wicked and harmful to the morals of the people' (Baldwin 1926, 10).

Ring brooches and jewellery as gifts

Jewellery and clothes were often given as gifts by royalty and wealthy nobles to their supporters. The wearing of such gifts indicated where ones loyalty and allegiances lay. The often numerous retinue of aristocratic households wore badges and liveries which identified their affiliation to a particular lord (Dyer 1989, 53). The expense of employing and maintaining men including many 'for whom there were no specific tasks' was justified by the benefits to the lord's image and standing in being surrounded by 'elegant companions' (Dyer 1989, 53). Particular symbols or devices usually worn in the form of badges were frequently also incorporated into other items of jewellery, including ring brooches. Such devices identified 'the spiritual, political or social allegiances or affiliations of the wearer' (Lightbown 1992, 188). A gold ring brooch from Manchester is decorated with open broom pod motifs. Broom was used as a device by various french nobles including Geoffrey of Anjou, the father of Henry II (Cherry 1983, 78).

In the light of the attitudes explicit in sumptuary laws, the giving of presents of expensive jewellery could be viewed as 'acknowledgement of the recipients' status' by their aristocratic donors (Hinton 1993, 328). The wider implications of sumptuary laws, which were designed, among other reasons to prevent the lower orders from wearing 'outrageous and excessive apparel' (Baldwin 1926, 47), were that 'the higher aristocracy ought to wear such things' (Dyer 1989, 88-89). Another important aspect of



Fig. 4. - 'Christ showing the five wounds' from a tomb chest in Gowran, Co. Kilkenny. (Photo M.B. Deevy).

medieval gift-giving was the concept of reciprocity, in that it was accepted as being an incurred debt, to be requited with allegiance or a service (Hinton 1993, 328). A possible Irish example of this use of jewellery is recorded in the *Calendar of Justiciary Rolls of Ireland* in the year 1302. Isabella Cadel and Fynewell Seyuyn, her maid, were arrested and brought to gaol in Kildare for coming from the felons, the Gaelic Irish, of the mountains. Isabella admitted that she had been sent by her lord Dermot Odymsi to the mountains to speak with certain friends and confederates of his, and that she had brought with her from the mountains certain jewels sent as a gift to him. Their goods were confiscated including a 'silver brooch of the weight and value of one penny' (Mills 1905, 368).

Ring brooches in betrothal and love

Gifts of jewellery also played an important part in the highly ritualised *l'amour courtois* (courtly love).

Ring brooches with the frame in the form of a heart are quite common throughout western Europe, although there are no examples in the Irish corpus. The inscriptions which decorate many circular ring brooches show that they too were commonly gifts between lovers. Four of the Irish ring brooches bear inscriptions which speak of love. An unprovenanced silver brooch, is inscribed AMOR VINCIT OMNIA (Love conquers all). The Prioress, in Geoffrey Chaucer's Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*, written in the fourteenth century also wore:

'..... a broch of gold ful shene,
On which was first i-writ a crowned A,
And after, amor vincit omnia.'

Love inscriptions in latin, such as this, were common, but they were more frequently written in French. This does not necessarily imply a French origin for such brooches as French was accepted as the language of chivalric love and gentility in medieval Europe. One Irish brooch is inscribed PAR AMUR FIN SUI DUNE (translation?) while a brooch from Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, (Fig. 1.3) is inscribed AMES AMIE; AVES M PAR CES PRESET (By this gift you have the friend you love). A brooch from Trim, Co. Meath, (Fig. 1.4) is inscribed AMEI AMEA and SUI X E X EM ILI DAM which John Cherry has interpreted as possibly a corruption of IE SUIS EN LIEU D'UN AMI (1988, 147) (I am in place of a friend you love) which would again appear to indicate the gift of a lover.

The giving of jewellery to a bride on betrothal and marriage was an established custom throughout western Europe in the middle ages (Lightbown 1992, 72). These gifts most often took the form of finger rings and ring brooches. The exchange of gifts symbolised 'a pledge of conjugal affection' and fidelity on betrothal and marriage (Lightbown 1992, 183). The desire for fidelity from women by their suitors is seen to be quite determined in the following testimonies. In 1184 the poet Johannes de Hauville in his *Archithrenius* wrote (Lightbown 1992, 138):

'My bride shall wear a brooch – a witness to her modesty and a proof that hers will be a chaste bed. It will shut up her breast and thrust back any intruder, preventing its closed approach from gaping open and the entrance to her bosom from being cheapened by becoming a beaten path for any traveller, and an adulterous eye from tasting what delights the honourable caresses of a husband'.

That the role of the brooch was to ensure chastity by shutting up the breast is also conveyed by the thirteenth century French poet Robert de Blois in his poem of advice to women *Le Chastisement des Dames* quoted above (Lightbown 1992, 138). A similar sen-

timent is proclaimed by the inscription on a thirteenth century gold brooch from Writtle, Essex:

JEO SUI FERMAIL PUR GARDER SEIN
KE NUS VILEIN N'I METTE MEIN

This translates essentially as 'I am the brooch to guard the breast that no knave may put his hand thereon' (Cherry 1976, 140). A pledge of unbroken faith was also signified by the incorporation of two pairs of clasped hands into the already symbolic unbroken circle of the frame of the ring brooch (Lightbown 1992). Clasped hands brooches were common in Northern Europe, particularly in Germany where they were known as *hanntruwebrazen*, 'betrothal brooches' (for examples see Lightbown 1992, figs. 86-91; Steen Jensen *et al* 1992, 175).

This tradition is also represented by a number of the Irish brooches. A gold ring brooch from Trim, (Fig. 1.4) has one pair of clasped hands incorporated into the top of its frame. The French inscription on the frame of this brooch, as discussed above, which translates as 'I am in place of the friend you love' shows that it was certainly a lovers gift. Unlike any of the other European examples this brooch also has a pair of joined hands clasping a collet projecting from the frame. It is unclear whether the projecting joined hands, represented in a number of Irish brooches shared the same symbolism as the clasped hands of these betrothal brooches. However the combination of both the projecting joined hands and the clasped hands on the Trim brooch, may suggest that they did also signify eternal troth. An unprovenanced Irish silver brooch, (Fig. 1.5) has a highly stylized pair of joined rather than clasped hands incorporated into its frame. The hands join under the pin tip rather than at the top and bottom of the frame as in the clasped hands brooches or at the bottom as in the projecting hands brooches. The remainder of the frame, however represents stylized sleeves as seen on many German *hanntruebrazen* brooches.

Ring brooches and jewellery with amuletic and talismanic properties

In the middle ages precious gemstones were highly valued for their perceived amuletic properties as well as for their beauty and rarity. These beliefs were not the prerogative of the uneducated superstitious masses but were very much entertained by the learned. Numerous medieval lapidaries (texts on gemstones), such as the *Book of Minerals* by the thirteenth century philosopher Albertus Magnus, dwelt mainly on the virtues of gems. The primary source for the medieval lore of precious stones was

the eleventh century poem the *Liber Lapidum* (Book of Stones) by Marbode the Bishop of Rennes. Marbodus's *Liber* was heavily based on similar work by classical writers such as Damigeron, Pliny and St. Isidore (Evans and Serjeantson 1933, xi; Armstrong 1973, 12). Gems valued for their amuletic qualities could be worn as charms in the form of pendants or mounted in finger rings or bracelets or they could be kept in special purses and worn on the dress often attached with brooches.

Prophylactic inscriptions designed to ward off harm were very common on medieval jewellery. These were usually in the form of religious names or formulae. In the thirteenth century, St. Thomas Aquinas debated in his *Summa Theologica* whether it was appropriate for people to wear the words of the gospels, as he feared that they were worn because of a belief in their magical rather than spiritual power. Such formulae often occurred in a bewilderingly abbreviated form. It is possible that many variations occur because of illiteracy on the part of the engraver. Some inscriptions, however appear to be deliberately cryptic. It may have been intentional to make inscriptions more mysterious thus increasing their 'magical qualities' in the superstitious medieval mind.

One Irish brooch has an example of what is probably a deliberately cryptic inscription. The bifaceted front face is divided into four sections. The inscription occurs alternately on the inner and outer facet around the frame. Although the letters on each of the four facets face alternately inwards and outwards, they must be read clockwise, beginning at the sign of the cross, even if upside down for the inscription to make sense. Thus it reads +AVEIMARIAG. Similarly the inscription on another Irish brooch 'ENYNAICARGAIRAMEVA+' is actually +AVE MARIA GRACIA NYNE when read backwards.

The Angelic Salutation 'Ave Maria Gratia Plena' (Hail Mary full of grace) was often used to invoke the protection of the Virgin. By the twelfth century adoration of the Virgin Mary had developed into a cult in the Western Church which was powerful enough to inspire a wave of church and cathedral building right across Europe (Frayling 1995, 57). A similar veneration of the Virgin in medieval Ireland is also indicated by the common use of devotional phrases on the Irish inscribed brooches. A silver brooch from Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim is inscribed with what has been interpreted as AVE MARIA GxP III, the last three letters indicating that the salutation should be repeated thrice (Anon 1857, 249). In other brooches the Salutation varies somewhat, such as +AVE(G?)V+AVEX and ISEUS MA(I?)RE HV.

The titulus IHESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDAEORUM (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews)



Fig. 5. - St. Margaret of Antioch from a tomb chest in Jerpoint Abbey, Co. Kilkenny. (Photo M.B. Deevy).

is a very common inscription on medieval ring brooches (Anon. 1860, 166). It often occurs in an abbreviated or blundered form (Callendar 1924, fig 3). The invocation of the cross was believed to be a defense from violent death or sudden harm (Saunders 1983, 146). A silver brooch from Trim, Co. Meath is inscribed on the front face with IHRNRI. An abbreviation of the titulus also occurs within the inscription on a gold ring brooch from Co. Monaghan '+IHSENAOIIP'CI', although the remainder of the inscription is unintelligible. The names of the Magi from the Orient do not occur in the story prophesied by Isaiah and told by Matthew in the Gospels. It was only in the early middle ages that they were named 'Caspar, Melchoir and Balthasar' (Schiller 1971, 94-96). Throughout medieval Europe the adoration of the three kings were believed to give protection from a number of illnesses, especially 'the falling sickness' (epilepsy), headache and fevers. They were also believed to protect one from the dangers of the road,

sudden death and sorcery and to assist in recovering lost property (Evans 1922, 125-126). This tradition can also be traced in the Irish ring brooches. The reverse face of a silver brooch from Trim, is inscribed with a version of the names of the three Magi IACPAR: MELCHAR: BALTICAR. In the medieval Corpus Christi pageant in Dublin, the goldsmiths acted as the three kings of Cologne 'riding worshipfully, with the offering and a star before them' (Clark and Refaüssé 1993, 21).

Conclusion

Ring brooches were worn by men, women and children, from almost all classes of society, in many countries across Europe throughout the middle ages. At their most elemental they were dress accessories, in the form of simple and adaptable clothes fasteners. They were also jewellery worn for personal adornment to enhance the wearer's beauty. However the materials they were made from, their decoration and inscriptions and contemporary accounts all indicate the variety of symbolic values that they could be seen as expressing. Certain types would have been perceived as having amuletic qualities and were therefore worn to promote the wearer's health. As jewellery made of precious materials ring brooches would have served as financial assets which could be realised in times of need. The wearing of ring brooches must also be viewed in the light of the chivalric ideals of European medieval society. Both the financial capacity to acquire and the legal permission to wear jewellery of precious materials would have been important signifiers of wealth and rank. Imitative brooches of non-precious metals would have expressed one's desire to rise in the social hierarchy. They also served as symbols of personal social relations, either secretly in the context of courtly love or more openly between brides and grooms to be. Ring brooches which combined the roles of dress fastener and jewellery with that of the badge, blazoned political loyalties and allegiances. Among other things these insights clearly indicate that some elements of medieval Irish society saw themselves as being part of a wider European tradition.

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